THE TIMES

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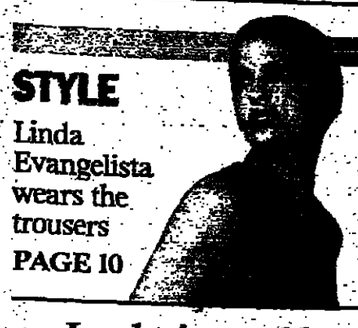

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MY RESOLUTION
Nigella Lawson promises to clean up her act
PAGE 11

Ice brings Channel Tunnel to halt

Cold weather shows no sign of relenting

By Len Jenkins

BRITAIN slithered into the new year today in the grip of a freeze which has left many roads impassable, claimed several lives and devastated sporting fixtures. Forecasters expect the cold snap to continue into the weekend.

Temperatures are not expected to rise above a maximum of 0C (32F) today. Most areas will be considerably colder with the wind-chill factor adding to the bleak outlook.

A London Weather Centre spokeswoman said: "We are likely to see it very cold with some snow, a few flakes for a lot of people rather than huge falls."

As revellers saw in the new year last night, temperatures were expected to fall to -10C (14F) in the Scottish highlands and glens and parts of Nottinghamshire, and -8C (18F) in parts of the country where snow was already lying.

Worst hit were Kent, East Anglia, Essex and the east coast from the Wash to Scotland, where between one and four inches of snow fell. The weather centre said yesterday the lowest overnight temperature had been -7C (19F) in Church Lawford, Warwickshire.

The wintry conditions have been blamed as the most likely cause of the electrical failure which left a Eurostar train and its 469 passengers stranded for more than two hours 11 miles inside the Channel Tunnel en route to France on Monday night. Engineers believe ice on the train melted in the heated tunnel, causing an electrical fault. The train broke down where one tunnel is shut because of the damage caused by fire two months ago.

"My resolution is to have the heating on higher this year"

The Prince of Wales and Prince Harry were diverted from RAF Marham to Stansted for their flight to Klosters and their annual skiing holiday.

In the Channel Islands, which experienced its first heavy fall of snow in nine years, 100 passengers were stranded when three flights to Britain from Jersey were cancelled.

The effects on the Continent have been far more severe and news agencies put the death toll at 180. In Italy, where Venice lagoon has frozen over, three people have died. A circus hippo died in Udine of bronchial pneumonia.

In Germany, where temperatures dropped to -15C (5F) and four people have died in the past week, 16 illegal immigrants, mainly from Bangladesh, gave themselves up in the eastern town of Wildau.

In Britain, the death of Charles Howard, 57, a farmworker who collapsed and died while digging his car out of the snow at Baddingham, Suffolk, was attributed to the weather.

Two climbers were blown off a ridge in Snowdonia. One suffered head injuries when he fell 60 feet and his companion sustained severe bruising. They were airlifted to hospital.

In North Yorkshire, council officials recruited more than 100 extra drivers from farms and haulage companies to assist their own staff clearing roads of snow.

The A66 from Scotch Corner to Penrith was closed, as was the eastbound M62 between Howden and North Cave. The M1 was down to one or two lanes in the Midlands and the North. So were the M2 and M20 in parts of Kent.

Motoring organisations reported that patrol cars had dealt with about 20 per cent more calls than normal and warned motorists in the worst-hit areas not to travel unless the journey was essential.

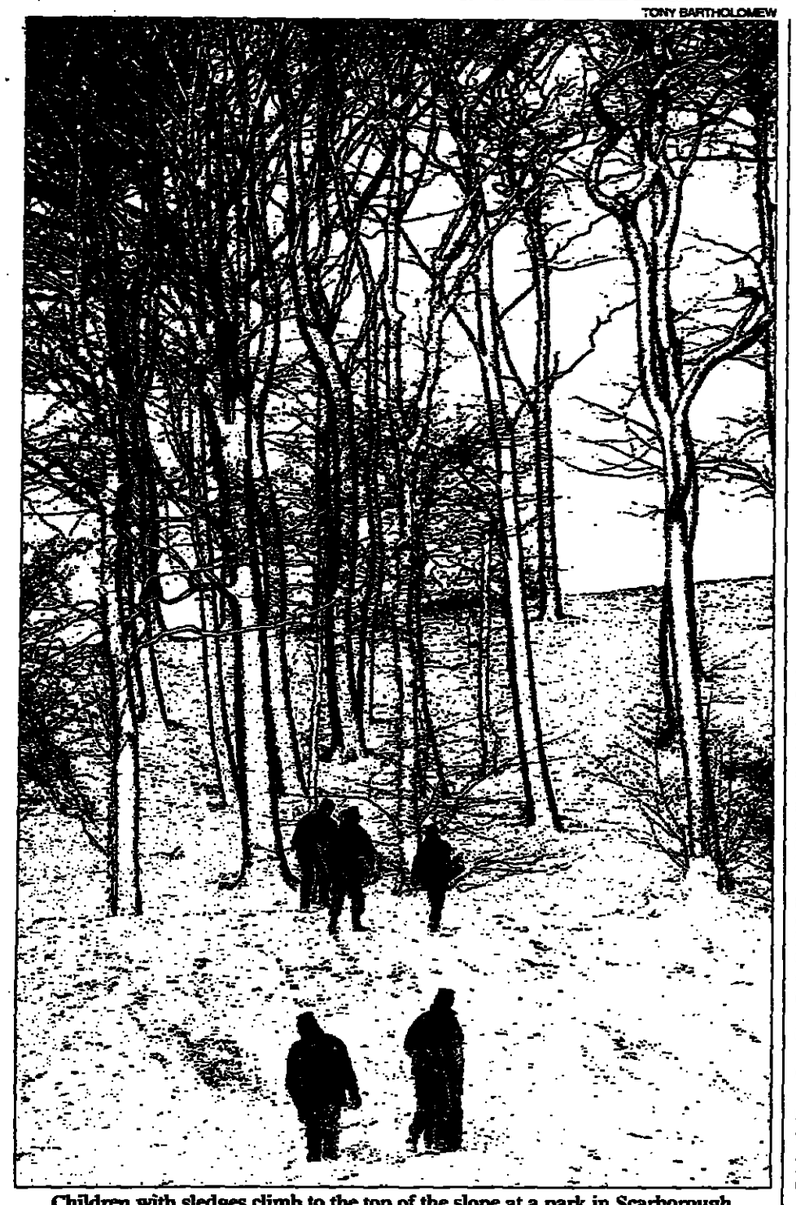
A traditional race across the ice on the Fens was abandoned because conditions on the washes at Welney, Cambs, were too dangerous.

An estimated quarter of a million football fans will be disappointed by postponed fixtures today.

Forecast, page 20
Winter break, page 21

Frosty's return: the head of a snowman kept frozen since last winter was found a new body yesterday by Lukee and Jacob Muren of Keighley, West Yorkshire

TONY BARTHOLOMEW



Children with sledges climb to the top of the slope at a park in Scarborough

Outrage over deal to make film about killer West

By Bill Frost

A LEADING production company is planning to make a film of the life of the serial killer Frederick West using material from the Cromwell Street murder inquiry.

Peter Harris, the Official Solicitor, said yesterday that he has entered into an option agreement contract with the Portman Entertainment Group. The deal gives the London company non-documentary film, television, video and ancillary rights to archive material from the family estate.

Mr Harris was appointed by the courts to look after the interests of the Wests' youngest children. He has the responsibility of maximising the financial return on the estate, which included the sale of the former family home at 25 Cromwell Street.

The project has outraged many of those touched by the mass murder. The West family is divided and the people of Gloucester are furious that the world is to be reminded of their city's darkest side.

The Rt Rev David Bentley, the Bishop of Gloucester, said: "I deplore the news. The relatives of the victims have suffered quite enough from publicity and considerable media exposure and so have the family of the Wests and, indeed, the whole city of Gloucester."

Doug West, the killer's brother, said the prospect of a film was "sick". He added: "I reckon they should leave it alone and let everybody forget about it.

"The relatives of the victims have had enough, I have had enough. I was hoping to have a good new year and put all this behind me. Now it will all come up again."

Much of the material was derived from the lengthy inquiry which led to builder West being charged with 12 counts of murder. He hanged himself on New Year's Day 1995 while awaiting trial. His wife, Rosemary, was later convicted on ten murder counts and is now serving life imprisonment.

No details were given about the financial aspects of the deal. But the option contract is believed to be in four figures. A large cash boost can be expected for the estate if a film is finally in production.

Terry Haines, the Mayor of Gloucester, also criticised the project. "It is a case of people seeing an opportunity to make money. I don't think a film about Fred West can be justified on any moral grounds."

Douglas French, the Tory MP for Gloucester, said: "This is another sordid example of commercial exploitation of tragic events which the residents of Gloucester would prefer to forget. The showing of any film will be deeply painful for relatives of victims.

"I intend to urge the Lord Chancellor to revise the duties of the Official Solicitor to ensure that any future commercial exploitation is not allowed to take priority over common human decency."

The Portman Entertainment Group has a successful track record — their forthcoming production of Daphne Du Maurier's *Rebecca* for Carlton Television has been described by critics who have seen the preview as a triumph. Other ventures have included *An Awfully Big Adventure*, starring Hugh Grant, and first British distribution rights for the Australian soap *Home and Away*.

Michael Gove, page 14

Deng 'very ill' in Peking hospital

From James Pringle in Hong Kong

A HONG KONG newspaper with close ties to the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) reported yesterday that China's senior leader, Deng Xiaoping, was seriously ill and receiving emergency treatment in Peking.

Sing Tao, which publishes a weekly supplement from *Liberation Daily*, the PLA newspaper in China, said that Deng, 92, was in military hospital 301 in the west of the capital. There was no official confirmation of the report, though Peking's vice mayor Zhang Baifa, who knows Deng, said last week that the ageing senior leader was in good health.

Deng, who was last seen in public in February 1994, when he looked frail and ailing, has said that he would like to visit Hong Kong to witness Britain handing back the territory to China in June this year. That looks increasingly unlikely.

Deng's health has long been a matter of speculation, and there have been a series of alarms in the past that were reflected in the stock markets of Hong Kong and Shanghai — this time, though, the news had little impact on share prices.

The latest reports come as state-run China Central Television prepares to broadcast a 12-part series on the life of Deng, who was purged by Mao three times, but each time returned from the wilderness. Newspapers in Hong Kong say it is unusual for such a tribute to be paid during the lifetime of a political leader.

To mark the event, newspapers published prominent photographs of Deng, whose stock has fallen lately with the emergence of President Jiang Zemin as the party's chosen successor.

There is no doubt that Deng is ill, and, as newspapers reported here last October, he may well have lost his ability to hear and even to walk and to converse. His death would not be concealed — it would filter out quickly, for the State and party apparatus is very porous.

Peking fears, page 9

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Stamp thief eluded security search at Wilson's No 10

By Adrian Lee

HAROLD WILSON, always hounded by fears of dark conspiracies against him, was betrayed by one of his staff who "looked common, possibly from the gardener class".

Government documents from 1966, released today, disclose that the Prime Minister's staff spent the spring of 1966 trying to unravel who, among the Downing St staff, might be selling collectable Rhodesian stamps from Mr Wilson's correspondence.

Envelopes bearing the stamps had acquired a rarity value as they had been declared illegal by the Paymaster General following Rhodesia's unilateral declaration of independence. The letters, addressed to Wilson, were turning up at the stamp dealer Stanley Gibbons and Wilson wanted to know how. It was not so much a case of stamping out Downing St leaks as of leaking out Downing St stamps.

The whodunnit began when a man, claiming to be from the Wilson household, walked into the Stanley Gibbons office in the Strand and sold eight envelopes bearing Rhodesian stamps — face value 2s 6d (12½p) each — for £2. Wilson's security chief, Group Captain MED Williams, was detailed to sniff out the culprit.

The description, provided by the buyers, was a starting point. Clean-shaven and of medium build, the suspect wore a hat but not glasses. He was 5ft 6in tall, aged about 45, and "looked common, possibly from the gardener class".

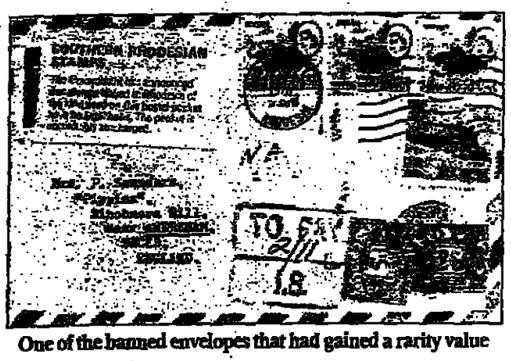
That "could apply to many members of the staff of Number 10," Group Captain Williams sniffed in his nine-page report. In all, 82 staff — from cleaner to Private Secretary — were interrogated, in the spring of 1966. The ministerial and Church appointments section came under scrutiny and the head of the post department offered to sign an affidavit saying she was not the thief.

Explaining his decision to question high-ranking officials, Group Captain Williams said: "Equity requires that the finger of suspicion should at least be pointed in that direction as well as at the civil servants who work here."

The rogue philatelist was never found.

As months passed it became clear that staff at numbers 11 and 12 also had access to Wilson's mail. So did police officers. Group Captain Williams, and the report's co-author, S.C. Firman, head of security at the Treasury, realised that the net was becoming too wide. In May 1966, the search was abandoned.

After the affair, Downing Street actually considered destroying all foreign stamps to avoid a repeat. There was even a suggestion that No 10 should follow the thief's lead and sell stamps to raise revenue. The idea brought the snappy response from the prime minister's office: "We are not philatelists. We are a government department dealing with correspondence."



One of the banned envelopes that had gained a rarity value

1966 papers, page 5

Markets end the year on a high

Shares and the pound ended the year in London at a record high.

The FT-SE 100 index of leading shares rose 2.8 points to close at 4,118.5, a new closing high and a rise of 11.7 per cent on the year.

The pound's Bank of England trade-weighted index rose 0.5 to close at 96.1, a rise on the year of 15.6 per cent Page 40
Stock market, page 34

Frinton wows the Germans again

The music hall artist Freddie Frinton, who found brief fame as Thora Hird's husband in the 1960s television series *Meet The Wife*, is now a cult hero to generations of Germans.

For millions of German television viewers New Year's Eve is not complete without watching Frinton in *Dinner For One*, an obscure comedy routine filmed more than three decades ago Page 3

Israel haggles over Hebron deal

Israel was still haggling with the Palestine Liberation Organisation over prisoner releases and target dates for future West Bank handovers, after agreeing on terms for its withdrawal from most of Hebron.

Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, has postponed his proposed summit with Yassir Arafat Page 6

"THE FIRST GENUINELY MARVELLOUS FILM OF 1997."
Caroline Westbrook, Empire
"HUGELY UPLIFTING... A SYMPHONY TO LIFE"
The Daily Telegraph
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Nominated for Golden Globes
STARTS TOMORROW
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Labour casts Major as general in the dirty war

Winning: abortion claim threatens bipartisanship

By Philip Webster
Political Editor

FRESH evidence that this year's election campaign will be the dirtiest on record emerged last night as Labour pledged to puncture John Major's "nice guy" image and the Conservatives strained the long-standing political truce over abortion.

Labour will this weekend launch an offensive to target the Prime Minister as the man behind what the Conservatives privately admit will be the most expensive negative advertising campaign in Britain. Only days before the campaign is unveiled, senior Labour sources said they intended to demolish the pretence that Mr Major was somehow removed from the fray and not responsible for actions done in the name of Conservative Central Office.

In a taste of the battle ahead, a Labour strategist said: "John Major is an out-and-out hypocrite. He likes to give off the image of nice, honest John. But he personally sanctioned the demon eyes adverts attacking Tony Blair, he accused John Prescott of not being able to understand long words and it was his speech in 1992 that conjured up the phrase about a Nightmare on Kinnock Street.

"He got away with it in 1992. We aim to ensure that he does not this year. At every opportunity we will point out that if the Tories play dirty, John Major will have approved it."

The Labour move is a pre-emptive strike against the multimillion-pound publicity campaign aimed at Mr Blair and Labour's taxation and spending plans that has been drawn up by Lord Saatchi, Sir Tim Bell and Lord Chadlington, the Tories' advertising chiefs, and approved by the Cabinet before Christmas. But the Conservatives last night saw it as recognition by Labour that Mr Major will be one of his party's leading assets in the election.

Labour sources said: "We know that we have to stop him from distancing himself from the dirty work done by his front men, Brian Mawhinney and Michael Heseltine. He is at the heart of the campaigning. We do not believe that he is dragged along reluctantly.

"After the negative campaigning gets into full swing, we fully expect Mr Major on past form to use an interview to try to distance himself from it and to say that this is all Tory party campaigning. He will try to keep his hands clean. But they will not be. Major will have sanctioned everything."

Relations between the parties on the eve of election year were bitter yesterday when the Conservatives appeared to associate themselves with renewed criticisms of Labour's abortion stance from the leader of Scotland's Catholics. Cardinal Thomas Winning suggested that Labour was pro-abortion and claimed that Labour MPs and candidates opposed to abortion were forced to suppress their views for fear of losing their trade union sponsorship, provoking indignant denials from the party leadership.

Clare Short, the Shadow Overseas Development minister, said the cardinal was wrong and "out of order". John Reid, the Scottish Catholic Labour MP, said he was on a "dangerous slope". The new attack provoked strong irritation in the Labour leadership after the decision of a new anti-abortion movement, the Pro-Life Alliance, to move into the election arena and to fight 50 seats.

The alliance, boosted by Sunday's attack on abortion by Cardinal Basil Hume, the Archbishop of Westminster, will launch its manifesto in London at the end of January. But Cardinal Winning's intervention also caused a breach in the traditionally bipartisan approach on abortion. It is not treated as a party issue because of the strong differences on conscience grounds within all parties.

However, Conservative sources accused Labour of hypocrisy on the issue and pointed out that Emily's List — a pressure group which aims to get more women elected as Labour MPs and which is organised by Barbara Follett, the candidate at Stevenage — insisted that candidates had to be pro-choice on abortion.

Tory sources said: "This is a classic example of the pressure put on Labour MPs to become pro-choice. It is true that a lot of trade unions put pressure on candidates to give pro-choice statements before they are selected. But with Emily's List, there is a blatant clause which says you have to be pro-choice before you get their support." Labour said that Emily's List was independent of the party. It warned the Conservatives to tread carefully over abortion, which many of their MPs supported.

The cardinal told BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme that Labour's attitude was perceived as strongly pro-abortion. "What I would like to see is the Labour Party saying in public that anyone who is pro-life and always has been has every much a right to promote those views within the Labour Party as someone who has pro-abortion tendencies.

"I have had too many Labour MPs tell of the pressures they are under to go along with the party line and if they didn't, they would lose their sponsorship from the trade unions — I can vouch for that. There is great pressure on them to be pro-abortion."

Governor's call gives heart to Eurosceptics

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

THE Governor of the Bank of England has heartened leading Conservative Eurosceptics by emphasising the need for "rigorous" checks to ensure that European Union countries do not fudge the conditions for entering a single currency.

Eddie George has insisted that the EU must be sure that the convergence between individual countries' economics that is required for a single currency must be shown to be lasting and not short-term.

In a letter to the prominent sceptic William Cash, Mr George set out a number of statements from the European Monetary Institute, on which he serves as a council member, warning that fudges must be avoided and that one-off measures to cut government deficits should not be seen as ensuring a lasting achievement of the terms.

Mr George's words come amid attempts by a substantial number of Cabinet ministers to force from Kenneth Clarke more details of how the British Government would judge whether other countries had fulfilled the criteria.

An attempt by the Chancellor to close down the issue with a Cabinet paper suggesting that judgments could not be made until 1998 failed two weeks ago when ministers such as Michael Howard, Gillian Shephard, Stephen Dorrell and Viscount Cranborne called for more information and were backed by the Prime Minister.

In his letter Mr George said that that in addition to dicussions at the EMI he and Bank colleagues had consistently argued the case for a thorough assessemnt of the "sustainability of convergence". He quoted from a speech to the CBI in which he doubted whether the DEU's architects had envisaged "the present hectic dash for the line" or that some of the runners "might be tempted to take artificial stimulants in order to get there".

Mr George said the statements showed the importance he attached to a "rigorous assessment of the degree of sustainable convergence" and would continue to argue the case.

Mr Cash said he had written to Mr George to determine the Bank's line on fudging. He said: "I have more faith in what the Bank would do than the Treasury and I am encouraged by the firmness of his views. Fudging is happening and the Cabinet must not be taken in by the attempts by the Treasury and Kenneth Clarke to pretend that it is a one-off occurrence."

The simmering tensions among Tory MPs on Europe were again on view yesterday when another Eurosceptic Teresa Gorman accused the Government of "rigging" a parliamentary debate over Europe. She said ministers had used "devious devices" to ensure that only pro-European MPs spoke in the Commons debate.

During the two-day debate, 32 speakers supported the European Union, while only 13 opposed further integration. But the figures could not be taken at face value, Mrs Gorman said. "The debate was rigged by the simple device of loading the Government benches with former ministers and Privy Counsellors," she said.

Alan Savage with his father's La Sevillana rose

Quirky rose brings rare colour to winter scene

By Paul Wilkinson

GARDENING experts are baffled by a rose which failed to bloom in the summer but has flowered in the middle of winter.

The La Sevillana rose is currently displaying vivid red flowers in a public garden in the chilly climes of East Cramlington in Northumberland.

Alan Savage, co-ordinator of Project 2000 which has planted the garden to mark the millennium, said: "I have never heard of anything like this happening before. The flowers are really fresh and bright red, it looks very strange and beautiful against the background of snow.

"It started flowering about two weeks ago to the astonishment of everyone living near by. It has become quite an attraction. There are two flowers that have fully bloomed and lots of rosebuds that are just starting to open. This bush is obviously oblivious to the fact that it should be lying dormant at the moment. It has been the most lovely surprise. The local children go along and stare at it, they have never seen anything like it and neither have I.

"I don't know why this has happened. The rose has survived winds, freezing temperatures, torrential rain, hail, sleet and snow, no one could have credited La Sevillana would make such a late appearance. It is just one of those marvellous quirks of nature. It is a remarkable thing and the crowning glory of a garden that was created through a lot of hard work from volunteers."

The garden covers what was once an acre of wasteland and contains more than a thousand varieties of rare plants and trees. Peter Surridge, a gardening expert, said: "Roses look and smell lovely and delicate but they are in fact very hardy and a few of them do bloom quite late in the year. However it has been a very chilly December and for this bush to burst into flower now it must be a particularly tough specimen."

Trevor Simms, an adviser at the Royal Horticultural Society at Wisley, said: "I suspect it is flowers hanging on from the summer, but if it is not, then it is something really unusual. They must wait and see if it does it again next winter. If it does then they will certainly have something special."

Arthur Widdas, chairman of the rose group on the Northern Horticultural Society, based at Harlow Carr Gardens in Harrogate, North Yorkshire, said: "I have heard of the variety, but I don't know much about it and I have certainly never heard of a rose coming into bloom in the middle of winter."

Goldsmith organiser quits 'party of nothing'

By Philip Webster
Political Editor

THE Referendum Party suffered an embarrassing blow yesterday when one of its paid officials quit and poured scorn on Sir James Goldsmith's claim that it had widespread support. John Bostock, a former Tory party agent, contended that Sir James had a maximum 15,000 supporters in the United Kingdom and that his party was "run by amateurs."

Trailing vitriol as he left his £24,000 job as a regional campaign manager, he announced that he was defecting to the rival UK Independence Party. The Referendum Party accused him of acting out of bitterness because of his difficulties in recruiting candidates in the North West region for which he was responsible.

Mr Bostock said the party was disorganised and did not have a single supporter in some seats. He also cast doubt on its ability to field candidates in every constituency at the election where a sitting MP fails to support a referendum on Europe. "The whole thing is a nonsense. It is just a complete and utter fallacy," he said.

"Fifteen thousand people is a drop in the ocean. It is a nothing party — and if it had been members, it would have been a lot less. The average Conservative party association has about 1,000 members."

Mr Bostock left his post as a Conservative agent for Blackpool in the summer in opposition to the Tories' European policy. He is to stand as the Independence Party's candiate in Preston. A spokesman for the UKIP said: "We are very pleased that Mr Bostock has decided to join us."

Mr Bostock accused Sir James of "backtracking" on his original suggested referendum question — whether Britain should be governed from Westminster or Brussels. The Referendum Party leader now prefers a "multi-optional" plebiscite accommodating a diversity of views.

"They say they will be in a position to put a candidate in every seat at the next election. That is absolute rubbish. They won't manage that at all. They haven't got the candidates or the organisation to support candidates. There are quite a few candidates that have dropped out as a result."

A Referendum Party spokesman, Priti Patel, said Mr Bostock had managed to recruit five new candidates in the north west and was "clearly slightly bitter". She added: "We didn't lose him. We had an additional team in place and then he went. We have replaced him with a very strong regional team. We have got a lot of support and a lot of interest in the North West." There were 48 party candidates ready in the 71 seats in the region, she added.

Carey urges society to protect the weak

The Archbishop of Canterbury called on society to make an "uncompromising commitment to protect the weak and vulnerable", in a new year address today. Dr George Carey also recalled the Dunblane tragedy and other crimes against children and adults, in his remarks broadcast five minutes after midnight on BBC1.

Dr Carey said: "There will be many who will be deeply thankful that 1996 has ended. For those of us who love children, 1996 will forever speak of Dunblane. None of us knows what 1997 will bring. Nationally, we shall be facing a general election. Individually, all kinds of challenges lie ahead, and many uncertainties."

Dr Carey said that he remembered the 1,400th anniversary of Augustine — the first Archbishop of Canterbury in 597 — as he looked at the paintings in the Chapel at Lambeth Palace but he also drew attention to the modern pictures "to remind us that the Church today is for all people of every race and continent". The images show outstretched hands praying. Dr Carey said: "Hands lifted in prayer must result in hands reaching out to all people with the love of God."

Scott inquest adjourned

A post-mortem examination had failed to establish the cause of death of the jazz musician and club owner Ronnie Scott, an inquest was told yesterday. The 69-year-old tenor saxophonist was found dead in his Chelsea flat in central London two days before Christmas. Peter King, his business partner, in a statement read to the Westminster Coroner's Court in central London, said Mr Scott had suffered from depression and had contemplated suicide in 1966. "He had had problems with his teeth and this had made it difficult for him to play his instruments." Paul Knapman, the Coroner, adjourned the hearing until February 5 for further inquiries.

Actors threaten pay fight

Theatres could be closed throughout the country in spring because of a campaign by the actors' union Equity to win a minimum pay rate of £250 a week. The union said actors had been subsidising the theatre for years by accepting low wages but were now feeling "frustrated and angry". Scores of regional theatres, although not those in London's West End, could be hit by the campaign. "For too long too high a priority and too many resources have been invested in short-term and over-expensive marketing strategies and over-elaborate sets at the expense of cast sizes and actors' salaries," said Ian McGarry, Equity general secretary.

Knife ban becomes law

A measure designed to keep knives out of the hands of youngsters comes into effect today. Section 6 of the Offensive Weapons Act 1996 will make it an offence to sell to anyone under 16 a knife, knife blade, razor blade, axe or any article which has a blade or is sharply pointed and which is made or adapted to cause injury. The offence will be punishable by up to six months' imprisonment. Folding pocket knives with a cutting edge not exceeding 3in and cartridge-head razor blades will be exempted from the sales ban. From September, it became a criminal offence to carry a knife on school premises, with a maximum penalty of two years' jail.

Tory call over OAPs

The Conservative MP Terry Dicks yesterday urged the Government to replace the present cold-weather payments system with extra payments to all old-age pensioners of £10 to £15-a-week throughout November, December, January and February. He said he supported Labour's campaign to ease the criteria for triggering cold-weather payments but that he wanted to go much further. Mr Dicks, MP for Hayes and Harlington, said the money could be raised by ending payments to "scroungers" who came to Britain, closing down the National Heritage Department, and reducing funds for overseas aid and the anti-Aids campaign.

Third time unlucky

Janine Marshall, a clerk with one of the country's biggest insurance firms, will have to put in an unusual claim after her car was hit three times in one morning while parked outside her home in Stockport, Cheshire. The first collision came as she was watching morning television. While she was telephoning the insurance company to tell them, another car slid on the black ice and ran into hers. As she comforted the woman driver of that car, a third hit the now badly crumpled Ford Fiesta. She said: "The trouble is, I don't know if the worst damage was done in the first, second, or third bump."

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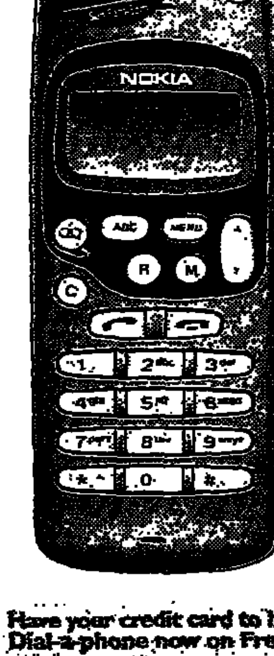

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Duke tells Labour of his empathy with common man

By Kathryn Knight

THE DUKE of Buccleuch yesterday responded to Labour Party criticism that he was out of touch by claiming that he knew a thing or two about the common man.

The Duke, Britain's largest private landowner, said his career as an "ordinary seaman" and his regular dialogue with the many hundreds of workers employed on his Scottish estate meant that he had seen a good deal of life.

The Duke was among a number of hereditary peers criticised in a report published earlier this week by Labour. The analysis is designed to justify the party's intention to strip Tory peers of their voting rights. The Shadow Home Affairs spokesman Jack Straw said the Duke owed his title to the fact that "one of his ancestors was the bastard son of Charles II." He asked how such a powerful landowner could represent the views of ordinary people. Yesterday, the Duke, whose title is derived from the Duke of Monmouth, Charles II's son by Lucy Waters, responded by suggesting that Mr Straw was "mesmerised" by acres and said his varied experiences meant he could teach the Labour MP a thing or two. Speaking on BBC Radio 4's *World at One*, he said: "As for the common man, I could tell Jack Straw a thing or two about life with a capital L, because I served as an ordinary seaman on the deck of a destroyer in wartime and saw a good deal of life there," he said.

"I also stood and served as a member of parliament for North Edinburgh for 13 years, fighting five elections and living and working in the countryside. We have something like 1,000 people involved in our estates at all levels. And I think that I get on with them and know their backgrounds probably better than he [Jack Straw] is ever likely to discover."

Asked how he would justify the voting rights of hereditary peers, the Duke said he would like to return to the Scottish system pre-1963 when Scottish representative peers were elected by their fellow members.

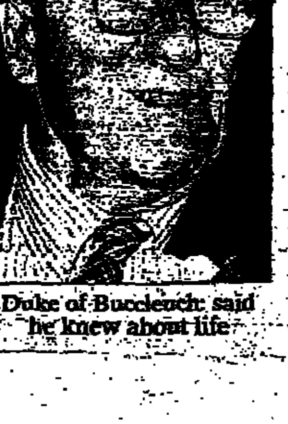
"England and Wales and Scotland should now all consider the idea of having representative peers, so that you didn't do away with the hereditary peerage completely," he said.

"But you got a very good young blood coming in, which you do with true hereditary peers. Whereas appointed peers tend to be sometimes a bit of a waste paper basket from the House of Commons."

He said the best justification was made by a robust Labour peeress some years ago after Harold Wilson had appointed some rather surprising candidates to the House of Lords. She had said: "Is it really so much better that peers should be appointed by Harold Wilson than by the Almighty?"

The Duke added that 95 per cent of the acres on his estate had a value similar to the space occupied by a waste paper basket in a City office.

Following publication of his analysis, Mr Straw, who attended Brentwood School in Essex and Leeds University, was also criticised yesterday for his derogatory use of the term "bastard". Gerald Hartup, director of the Freedom Association, a right-wing pressure group, said Mr Straw's comment was shameful. "Children from non-traditional families will be devastated by this calculated insult," he said.



Duke of Buccleuch: said he knew about life

هكذا من الأصل

Forgotten Fred keeps German new year alive

By Russell Jenkins

THE long forgotten music hall artist Freddie Frinton, who found brief fame as Thora Hird's husband in the 1960s television series *Meet The Wife*, is now a cult hero to generations of Germans.

Millions of German television viewers do not believe their New Year's Eve celebrations are complete without switching on to see Frinton perform in *Dinner For One*, an obscure comedy routine filmed more than three decades ago in black and white.

The sketch, filmed in Hamburg by the NDR broadcasting station in 1963, shows Frinton and his stage sidekick May Warden play out one of their variety set pieces, familiar to music hall audiences, as the long-suffering butler to a deluded 90-year-old dowager.

It has become so ingrained in German popular culture that it has been shown on television every New Year's Eve for the past 33 years. German sociologists earnestly debate its significance. It enjoys its own entry in the German *Guinness Book of Records* and enthusiasts like to hold *Dinner For One* parties — they watch the video, eat mulligatawny soup, North Sea shellfish and roast chicken like the characters.

Gertrud Erbach, a German librarian who lives in London, said: "People like to watch it two or three times on New Year's Eve because the local stations show it at different times. It is a cult much like the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. People know exactly what is going to happen, they know the words and can anticipate the jokes. It is something that everybody knows."

This year a dedicated viewer with access to both cable and satellite TV could have watched it six times between 7pm and 1am. It was screened on six regional television stations of the third television channel, Germany's equivalent to Channel 4. More than 7.6 million Germans saw the grainy black and white original last year and even more were expected to have switched on last night. The sketch is still shown undubbed and without sub-titles.

Once a favourite at end-of-pier shows, Frinton plays a long-suffering butler serving his mistress, Miss Sophie, at her 90th birthday dinner. Places are set for old military types, Sir Toby, Admiral von Schneider, Mr Pommeroy and Mr Winterbottom, all of whom are long since dead.

To keep the charade alive, Frinton has to keep circling the table as he acts the part of each guest drinking a toast to Miss Sophie's health at the end of each course. Frinton,

Frinton made his name playing stage drunks

who made his name as a stage drunk, becomes increasingly inebriated. Every time he walks around the table he trips up on a tiger rug in a parody of the music hall artist's prat fall.

At every stage, Frinton asks plaintively whether he has to go through the same procedure every year. In a reply that raises instant recognition throughout Germany, Miss Sophie insists: "The same procedure as every year."

The punch line is a sexual innuendo that may have struggled to appear risqué even to an audience brought up on Max Miller sketches. When it comes to Miss Sophie's bedtime, she holds out her arms to her butler in an invitation to be whisked off to the dowager's bedroom. She insists that the butler performs the "same procedure as every year" whereupon James replies wearily: "I'll do my very best."

For much of his career Frinton scratched a living on the variety circuit. His most well known character was as a drunk. His catchphrase "good evening ossifer" was heard from Blackpool to summer season at Bournemouth.

Frinton, son of a Grimsby fisherman, went on to achieve fame in *Meet The Wife*. Frinton's lugubrious features perfectly matched the henpecked character but the series came to an end in 1968 when he died from a heart attack.

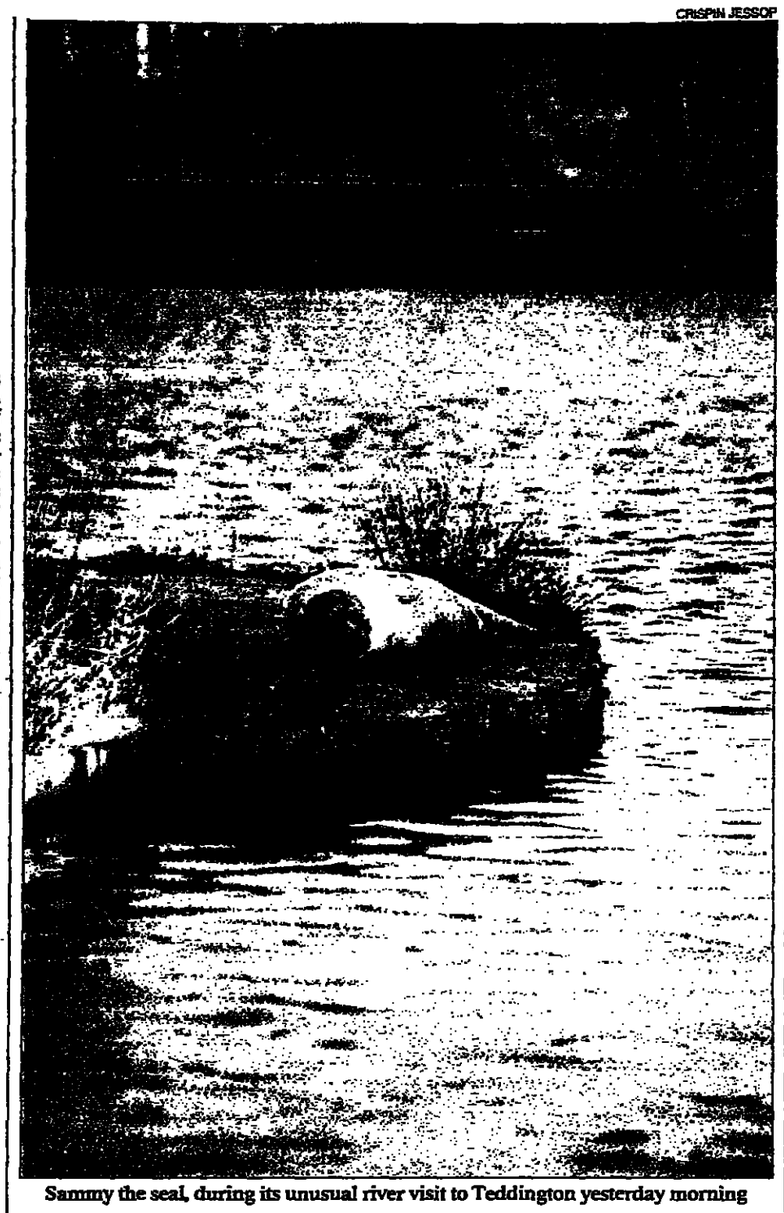
Some years earlier he had been spotted by German television executives from Hamburg when he was performing for seaside audiences in Blackpool. In 1963 Frinton travelled to Germany to appear on a television chat show along with the familiar tiger rug from *Dinner For One*. However, he always refused to film the show in German because, it is rumoured, he didn't like Germans. One television executive told BBC Radio 4's *Today programme*: "The more often you watch it, the funnier it gets. It is typically British black humour."

However, two years ago a *Munich-based newspaper* suggested that Frinton had done more for Anglo-German relations than the footballer Jürgen Klinsmann.

Perhaps the biggest compliment to the show came during the first reading of the federal budget in Germany this year. Ingrid Matthaus-Maier, the *German Social Democratic* Party's front bench spokesperson on public finances, dropped into English to accuse Theo Waigel, the Bonn finance *minister, of adopting the* "same procedure as every year" to run up a huge budget deficit. The reference brought the house down.

Leading article, page 15

CRISPIN JESSOP



Sammy the seal, during its unusual river visit to Teddington yesterday morning

Seal makes trip up the Thames

TWO rowers spotted a seal lolling on a bank of the Thames just upstream of Teddington yesterday morning (Nick Nuttall writes).

Crispin Jessop, one of the oarsmen, and a keen amateur photographer, said: "We were paddling into Trowlock Island, about half a mile upstream of Teddington Lock, after rowing to Hampton Court and back. The wind chill factor made it about -12C. Suddenly, here was this seal.

"We have seen great-crested grebes and quite a few herons. But I have never seen a seal upstream," Mr Jessop, 49, a salesman, said. The seal, which has been named Sammy, must have travelled 50 miles up the Thames.

Mr Jessop's friend Gerry Spring urged him to dash back to his home in Twickenham to fetch a camera. He had the fleeting chance of capturing the seal for posterity before she turned over on her side, and plopped back into the river. "We wondered whether we should contact the RSPCA," said Mr Jessop. He believes the animal must have negotiated a salmon ladder to have got beyond Teddington Lock.

The Environment Agency's Thames region office said: "We received a call from a pub saying they had seen a seal. I suppose we wondered if they had started the new year festivities early. But we do get reports of about one seal a year."

The agency said it did not intervene in such cases. "The river is basically tidal at this point and there is a good supply of fish. The seal will probably make its way back down the river under its own steam."

Police seek children in £180 taxi ride home

By A Staff Reporter

POLICE are trying to trace two children who apparently set off together on a mysterious 400-mile round trip by train and taxi with at least £180 in cash.

Officers in Liverpool were alerted on Monday night after a ten-year-old girl and six-year-old boy arrived at the city's Lime Street Station on a train from London. A ticket collector noticed that their tickets were valid only to Luton, Bedfordshire, but when he challenged them, they ran off into the city.

After media appeals yesterday, the wife of a Liverpool taxi driver contacted police to confirm that her husband had driven the children back to Luton on Monday night. The girl was able to pay the driver the fare, believed to be about £180, in cash. The children were of Mediterranean appearance and spoke with foreign accents.

Detective Chief Inspector Phil Barr said: "The children got into a taxi in Lime Street and asked to be taken to London. The driver said he could not do that but took them to the taxi office.

"The girl rang her mother from a phone box there and put her on to the taxi driver. The mother confirmed that he should drive them home and that her daughter had enough money to pay the fare.

"When they got there the children asked to be dropped in Luton rather than at a specific address, and the girl paid the taxi driver. We are satisfied that it is the same two children and that they are now in Luton.

"But we are unable to trace who they are, and we have spoken to our colleagues in Bedfordshire constabulary to try to ascertain who they are and that they have returned to their mother.

"It is a bizarre story, but they are all the facts we have. We still don't know why they travelled all the way to Liverpool or why they had all that money with them in the first place."

A Liverpool police spokeswoman said: "It might just be that they were meant to get off at Luton but missed their stop and for some reason had enough money for the taxi."

What's in a name for newborn Cassius?

By Joanna Bale

BY naming their newborn son Cassius, after christening his elder brother Columbus, Lady Helen Taylor and her art dealer husband Tim have re-established a tradition of exotic royal names.

Cassius, who is twenty-sixth in line to the throne, may have been named after the Roman who led the conspiracy against Julius Caesar. Another, less notorious Cassius, is the boxer Muhammad Ali, who changed his named from Cassius Clay.

Mandy Allwood, the woman who lost eight babies after becoming pregnant on fertility drugs last year, also named one of them Cassius. The origin of the name is unclear but it could come from the Latin *cassus*, meaning "hollow" or "empty".

Whatever their reason for choosing the name, the Taylors were keeping it quiet yesterday. A Buckingham Palace spokeswoman said she had "no idea" what had inspired them.

Cassius's brother Columbus, from the Latin *columba* meaning pigeon or dove, appears to have been named after a 6th-century Scottish saint, St Columba, or the 15th-century Italian explorer, Christopher Columbus, although there were rumours that it was the former name of the Taylors' favourite Knightsbridge restaurant in their courting days.

Other unusual royal names include Princess Anne's daughter Zara. Princess Alexandra's daughter Marina Mowatt chose Zenouska for her daughter.

The Duke and Duchess of York's daughters Beatrice and Eugenie were named after Queen Victoria's youngest child and her daughter.

In the 13th century, Edward I named a daughter Berengaria, while in more recent times George III named four of his 15 children Augusta or Augustus — two as their middle names. He also had a son called Adolphus and another Octavius.

Royal watcher, Margaret Holder, said: "With a common surname like Taylor, you need an unusual Christian name to stand out, especially if you have royal blood."

Britons pay £5bn to keep life sweet

By Daniel McGrory

BRITONS kept their place as the world's leading consumers of chocolate and confectionery in 1996, raising their spending by 6 per cent to £4.9 billion.

Among the newer temptations, chocolate ice-cream bars accounted for £77 million, and sales of kingsize bars rose 28 per cent to £49 million.

The favourite seller for the tenth year in succession was the KitKat, beating off the challenge from the Mars bar, says Nestlé in its annual review of the confectionery market. In the UK, 47 KitKat bars are eaten every second.

The sexes have their differences: men are more likely to favour Mars and Snickers bars, while women prefer what the experts classify as "lighter" brands such as Aero and Flake. A third of all the chocolate and confectionery is eaten by children, whose top-selling brands were Milky Way, Smarties, Milky Bar and Rowntree's Fruit Pastilles.

There is only limited evidence of concern about having a sweet tooth. The purchase of sugar-free mints has more than doubled since 1993 — although they lag far behind the Polo.

Saudi lawyers say trial of nurses will be fair

By A Staff Reporter

LAWYERS acting for the two British nurses accused of murdering an Australian colleague in Saudi Arabia yesterday insisted that they would help them to receive a fair trial.

They issued an explanation of the country's legal system after widespread reports in the western media that defence lawyers have no right to conduct cross-examinations or arrange for translators.

The firm Salah Al-Hejailan, based in the capital Riyadh, said the case could display the merits of Saudi's legal system to the outside world. The statement included details on how victims' families can waive their right to ask for the death penalty in return for the payment of "blood money".

Deborah Parry, 41, from the Midlands, and Lucille Lauchlan, 31, from Dundee are jointly charged with murdering Yvonne Gilford, 55, a senior theatre nurse at the King Fahd Military Medical College, in Dhahran.

They were arrested on December 20, nine days after Miss Gilford was found stabbed and beaten to death, and are being held in prison. If found guilty the two could be publicly executed. However Ghazi Alghosaibi, the Saudi ambassador, said the death sentence was not automatic.

The legal firm was appointed after a visit by the British consul Timothy Lamb to the two women.

Earlier this week, Miss Parry's family expressed shock and surprise at her arrest. They described her as a dedicated nurse who could not have committed the crime.

Her family say that she suffered a succession of blows. Her mother Eunice was killed in a boating accident while on holiday in Norfolk. Her father John died several years later and then her teenage brother was killed in a motorcycle crash. Sandra Ashbee, 40, Miss Parry's eldest sister, who lives in Alton, Hampshire, said: "It just doesn't add up. There is no way she has done this. I will stake my life on it. Life is so precious to her because of what happened to her in the past."

Parry: family insists on her innocence

The lawyers stressed that Islamic law would ensure a fair trial for the couple. The law firm said that the killing had "touched upon the feelings of the Saudi community as the offence has been allegedly committed by foreigners who are members of the nursing profession which is generally believed to be a profession of mercy".

It said suspects had "the right to have a fair trial. This involves magisterial inquiry to be conducted by a judge, the right of the accused to seek legal assistance and to be assisted by a translator".

The firm said a defence lawyer would speak on behalf of the nurses in court and could conduct a form of cross-examination. There would be no prosecution lawyer, only a police report with the judge handling the rest of prosecution case. Under Islamic law, the victim's family could ask for blood money in place of the death penalty.

Wheelchair ban at 'friendly' station

By Paul Wilkinson

TRAVELLERS in wheelchairs have been told that they cannot use trains at a new station hailed as disabled-friendly when it opened four months ago.

Yarm Station in Stockton-on-Tees cost £600,000 to build and incorporates the latest facilities for the disabled, including tactile surfaces and ramps. But the station at the market town is unmanned, and Regional Railways says that for insurance purposes a member of staff must be present if disabled people board or alight from trains.

The problem came to light when Eric Parker, a wheelchair-bound pensioner, wanted to travel from his home in Sheffield to visit his son Ted, who lives only 30 yards from the station. His son said: "We were delighted when the new station opened as it meant Mum and Dad could visit. Dad has an electric wheelchair and the light transport system in Sheffield means he can get from his home to Sheffield station easily, then catch a train to York and on to Yarm."

But when Mr Parker, 67, tried to book a ticket, he was told he could not get off at Yarm because of his wheelchair. Mr Parker was told he would have to get off at the nearest manned stations at Darlington or Middlesbrough — both more than a dozen miles away — and be collected. Even the assistance of Mr Parker's able-bodied son was not enough to lift the restriction.

His son said: "We can see Yarm station from the house, but in the end Dad had to travel to Darlington where Age Concern kindly picked him up in an adapted minibus and brought him here. That is a 24-mile round trip, which is bad enough, but there are unmanned stations at more far-flung places which would mean even more discomfort for disabled passengers. Half the stations in Britain must be unmanned, and the disabled are effectively banned from using them."

A spokesman for Regional Railways said: "We do provide a good service for disabled passengers but this relies, for insurance purposes, on staff being available to provide assistance getting on and off the train. When Yarm station was built, we carefully considered facilities for the disabled and these were provided with a view to the future. We are carrying out trials on portable ramps which can be carried on trains and operated by the conductor to allow disabled access. The cost of manufacturing and fitting such ramps is expensive, and as a private company we require funding to fit them.

"We have approached local councils in the hope of them paying for this facility but, unfortunately, at the moment wheelchair-bound passengers canot use unmanned stations."

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MR2

Prince unveils plan to save abandoned giants from ruin

By Marcus Binney

THE Prince of Wales discloses a plan today to breathe life into some of the nation's largest and most neglected listed buildings by turning them into low-cost housing for local people.

His newly formed Phoenix Trust will acquire sites such as country houses, textile mills, hospitals and military enclaves, then convert them for sale as places to live and work.

The idea has been prompted by the large numbers of historic properties vacated by the Ministry of Defence and the NHS. Kit Martin, the architect and developer who has been a prime mover in the formation of the trust, said yesterday: "Within a few years of being vacated, many of these buildings have become derelict. Some have already been demolished. We cannot continue to allow acres of useable historic buildings to be lost."

The Prince is president of the trust and will be involved in choosing buildings for conversion. The trust will start work this year, tackling four sites at a time, with each project taking about four years for acquisition, repair, conversion and sale. A typical project would cost up to £5 million, although some could be up to £10 million. In each case, most of the cost will be recouped from sales, mostly to local people at competitive prices, to help to fund the next projects.

Some owners have already made it clear that they are keen to sell, either freehold or on a long lease. A substantial sum of seed money, believed to be well into six figures, has been provided by the oil company Arco. The trust is also likely to seek grants from the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage and its counterparts in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Mr Martin said: "The Phoenix will be able to tackle only a small proportion of the many fine buildings now at risk, but the Prince's example will encourage others, showing these buildings are not useless white elephants but potentially some of the most interesting places to live and work."

The chairman of the trust is David Taylor, who has been chief executive of the Government's regeneration agency, English Partnerships.

The Prince is known to be concerned about such buildings as the Royal William Victualling Yard at Plymouth. It is the size of a small Georgian town and remains largely empty after being handed to Plymouth Development Corporation in 1993.

The Ministry of Defence has been reluctant to provide statistics of its disposals after an outcry at advertisements for Greenwich Royal Naval College.

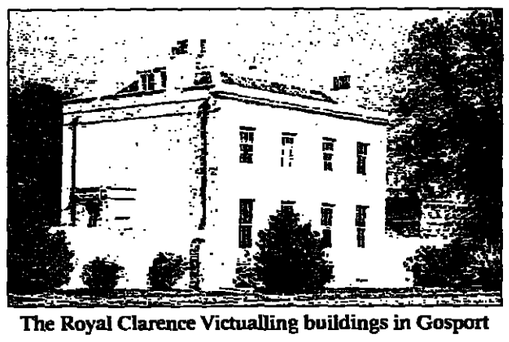
However, Lord Cranborne, a Defence under-secretary, said in 1994 that the MoD had "more than 700 listed buildings, twice as many as the National Trust". Candidates for disposal include the Royal Clarence Victualling at Gosport, the former guards barracks at Caterham, dating from the 1870s, and the Regency Horseshoe barracks at Shoeburyness, Essex.

The NHS is closing numerous specialist hospitals in listed buildings, including the Regency Royal Seabathing Hospital at Margate, Kent. Ninety-eight of 121 former NHS mental hospitals in England are to go by 2000, according to a report published last year. Those empty or soon to be vacated include the Royal Earlswood Hospital near Redhill, Surrey, the Regency Asylum in Gloucester, the Georgian Asylum at Stafford, and Garlands, Carlisle. Mental hospitals were often built as showpieces of philanthropy by county councils and boroughs, and were built on south-facing slopes in landscaped grounds.

Other candidates for the new trust will be a series of hospitals sold to developers during the 1980s boom, which still remain empty. Among these is the Regency Hospital at Exvale, outside Exeter, where English Heritage is carrying out repairs.

In Scotland, more than 100 substantial country mansions lie empty and decaying, many unroofed after the war to avoid paying rates.

In Wales, a major candidate for the trust is Pembroke Dock, where numerous Regency buildings designed by Edward Holl, architect to the Admiralty, are vacant and in a state of decay.



The Royal Clarence Victualling buildings in Gosport

DAVID DYSON

Annie Nightingale at Heathrow yesterday. She broke her leg when she was mugged in Cuba on Christmas Eve

Mugged DJ flies home for treatment

THE Radio 1 disc jockey Annie Nightingale returned to Britain yesterday after being mugged in Cuba on Christmas Eve. She was taken straight from Heathrow to hospital for a check-up after the attack in Havana.

The 54-year-old was accompanied by a British nurse on the flight from Cuba, via Madrid. She looked tired and drawn as she was carried off on a stretcher and taken by ambulance to St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, west London.

Miss Nightingale broke her leg when a mugger snatched her bag. A companion who chased the attacker suffered a broken collarbone. Surgeons operated on her the same night and a pin and screws were placed in her leg just below the hip. She will probably not be able to walk for two months.

A spokesman for the BBC said that Miss Nightingale, who became Radio 1's first female disc jockey in 1970, was pleased to be home. Miss Nightingale, who had been in Havana to research a music programme, said the affair had been very stressful. "I am just relieved and delighted to be home. I broke down in tears on the way to the hospital because of the whole situation. It was just very difficult being treated by people you don't understand.

"The language barrier was a major problem although I think the doctors did a great job," she added. Miss Nightingale was being seen by a consultant at St Mary's yesterday and was undergoing a series of X-rays. She is expected to remain in hospital for at least a week.

Police arrested two youths in connection with the attack, in which Miss Nightingale's bag, containing her contacts book, passport, money and return ticket, was stolen.

A 17-year-old and 20-year-old, apprehended at a house in central Havana near the scene of the mugging, have been charged with robbery with violence and causing actual bodily harm. Both offences carry maximum sentences of eight years.

Pensioner lay dead in home for two weeks

Ex-servicemen living in sheltered housing are furious after a war veteran lay dead in his bedsit for two weeks. His body was not discovered until after Christmas, when the warden was on holiday in Spain. Police say Les Flemons, 73, a former Royal Navy electrician, probably died on December 14. But his body was not found until December 29, when his son called police because he could not get a reply at his father's home in Thetford, Norfolk.

Residents said they had seen no one patrolling the complex of 36 bedsits and one-bedroomed flats since the warden and her husband left for a two-week holiday on Christmas Eve. Housing 21, which runs the complex, said that Mr Flemons had indicated that he did not need regular visits.

Commando deal

Senior officers are writing to ex-commandos who have left the Royal Marines in the past few years, offering them the chance to rejoin without again undergoing the notorious 30-week training course. The 7,500-strong Royal Marines are under strength by about 700 men.

Fingers severed

Two men with meat cleavers and baseball bats attacked a 21-year-old man in Levenshulme, Manchester, hacking off two fingers and leaving him with cuts to his head, forearms and body. Police were later waiting to interview the victim, Christopher Hart Samuel, in hospital.

Church attacker

A man who punched a worshipper and a female steward during early Mass at Westminster Cathedral, London, was ordered by a stipendiary magistrate to be detained at a mental hospital. Noel O'Connor, 29, leapt on to the altar, smashing a 6ft crucifix and causing £10,000 damage.

Meningitis death

An 18-year-old Birmingham woman has become the latest fatality from meningitis. Dawn Arries died early on Christmas Day, 36 hours after complaining of a stiff neck. A four-year-old Stoke boy and a 14-year-old Newcastle girl died from the infection before the holiday.

Watch for owls

A campaign is being launched to save the barn owl. Numbers in Britain have declined by 70 per cent since the 1930s to about 5,000 breeding pairs. The public is being asked to report sightings to the British Trust for Ornithology for a national register to provide information on behaviour.

Record pilchard

A 14oz 6 dram pilchard caught by Wesley Donoghue, 15, at Brixham, Devon, has been certified by the British Record Fish Committee as the heaviest on record, 6oz more than the previous best. Wesley, who used squid as bait, plans to have it stuffed and hung on his bedroom wall.

Peter the Great arrived in Britain in 1697, not 400 years ago as stated in a leading article on Monday.

How to improve your health odds in life's unequal lottery

MEDICAL BRIEFING

ERNIE BAILEY died of a suspected heart attack less than two years after winning the lottery jackpot. The wealth may have brought happiness but it is also said to have led to a life of sloth and gluttony.

Mr Bailey, 63, a former Birmingham factory worker, already had evidence of heart disease before he won the jackpot in April 1995. By the time he died, his weight had reached more than 22 stone, reportedly the result of his fondness for lager, takeaway meals, and lying on the sofa watching videos. He is said to have disregarded medical advice to lose weight and take exercise, and to have failed in his attempts to give up smoking.

Mr Bailey's comparatively early end may in part have been determined by his weight at birth. The poorer the parents' background, the likelier that a baby will be of low birth weight, and the greater the chance that when he or she reaches middle age, cardiovascular disease will occur.

Diet in childhood and early life is also related to social background. It takes time, as well as money — both of which may be in short supply in working-class homes — to prepare the type of food recommended by dieticians as likely to keep the weight down and blood cholesterol low. Furthermore, when Mr Bailey was born, childhood infections were much more common in poor households than today.

It is over-simplistic to claim, as is commonly done, that class differences in life expectancy can just be attributed to workers over-indulging in beer, cigarettes and fried food, not eating enough vegetables, and taking insufficient exercise. But with lung cancer and heart disease the most important killers in late middle age, faulty diet and lack of exercise must contribute to the difference in mortality.

Mr Bailey's obesity, with his consumption of convenience food and large quantities of beer would have made it likely that one day an atheromatous fatty plaque would rupture in a coronary artery and block it so that his heart muscle would suffer fatal injury.

We are born unequal, yet the odds in life's race can be altered. Mr Bailey's chances of reaching old age would have been improved by not smoking; half an hour's daily brisk walk; and a slimming diet — in particular, keeping the fat consumed down to 30 per cent of energy intake, and a high intake of anti-oxidants — vitamins C and E, betacarotene and folic acid. His regular visits to the pub would not have damaged those chances if he had no more than a couple of pints of beer, but a few glasses of red wine would have been a better tipple.

Dr Thomas Stuttaford

Bailey: believed to have died of heart attack

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Flesh-eating bug victim wins £62,000 damages

By A Staff Reporter

A BOY who had to have lifesaving surgery after becoming infected with the "flesh-eating bug" has won £62,100 damages from a medical practice and the doctor who wrongly diagnosed his condition.

Peter Duffy was told that he was suffering from gastroenteritis and paracetamol was prescribed for a muscle injury. But within days of a home visit by a family doctor, the teenager was undergoing surgery to cut out tissue from his right arm and chest after he developed necrotising fasciitis. At the Court of Session in Edinburgh Mr Duffy sued Adrian Mairs, the GP who first saw him, and a family doctors' practice.

He claimed that if he had been referred to hospital more quickly, a virulent infection he was suffering from would have been identified earlier and treated. This would have avoided him developing the bug and the need for surgery, which has left him with extensive scarring.

Lord Hamilton said in a written judgment issued yesterday that referral 40 hours earlier would have prompted treatment before a condition developed that had "permanent adverse effects".

The judge was told that Mr Duffy was a 15-year-old pupil at St Augustine's High School in Edinburgh when he fell ill in November 1991. A few days beforehand he had taken part in a boxing session, when he suffered cuts to his wrist and knuckle.

After he felt unwell, suffering vomiting, diarrhoea and a swollen arm, his mother phoned the Whinpark Medical Centre in Edinburgh. Dr Mairs, who was then an additional GP at the practice, went to his home.

Dr Mairs made a primary diagnosis that the boy was suffering gastroenteritis which required no medical treatment. The doctor diagnosed his painful swollen upper arm as a muscular injury. His symptoms worsened and two days later his mother again called the practice. Another doctor called on him and immediately had him admitted to Edinburgh Royal Infirmary.

An acute streptococcal infection was diagnosed and antibiotics were administered intravenously. But a consultant surgeon realised that necrotising fasciitis had developed. If an operation had not been carried out the boy would have died, the court was told. He later had to have skin grafts.

The court was told that after leaving school the teenager was certified as unfit for work.

Charity discloses cruel realities of turtle trade

By Daniel McGrory

THE chainsaw prised away the shell with cruel ease while the giant turtle thrashed around on the beach with what strength it still had, trying to escape the poachers' grasp.

Some of those wishing to buy the exquisitely marked turtle shell, or the meat, boast that they are willing to pay more if they know it is hewn off while the creature is still alive. The life of this reptile, which was more than 60 years old, was extinguished in a few minutes so that some unthinking tourist could go home from a South Sea island holiday with an ornate musical instrument shaped from its shell, or try some exotic restaurant dish.

Sea turtles have been on Earth for 150 million years, before the age of the dinosaurs. Today their numbers are dangerously depleted, and only seven species remain.

They are increasingly being caught, sometimes accidentally, in fishing nets, mainly by those trawling for shrimps. Even if the turtle survives the capture, the fishermen do not bother to extricate it but cut off its ensnared flippers and throw the turtle back into the water as shark bait.

Conservationists say that the green turtle — which is used in turtle soup — has lost 700,000 nesting sites in Australia in the past 25 years, and that Mexico's olive ridley turtles have lost 350,000 sites in the same period.

The leatherback turtle, which migrates up and down the west coast of Britain every year, is becoming a rarer sight. Along with four other species, it is now officially classed as endangered.

Less than 1 per cent of hatching turtles survive to adulthood; and some turtles do not reach breeding age until they are older than 30.

At sea they are fast and graceful creatures using their paddles in the same way a bird uses its wings.

Below the water, a turtle hold its breath for hours at a time, and can slow its heartbeat to only one beat every nine minutes to conserve oxygen, as it migrates thousands of miles in a year, moving between nesting and feeding grounds.

But their ancient nesting sites are being torn up, because of the greed for beachside developments, their eggs are being stolen as souvenirs or restaurant delicacies, and there is a growing trade in turtle body parts.

Turtle skin is used for boots and handbags; the reptile's oil is used for caulking boats and for traditional medicines; and the beautiful translucent shell is used for spectacle frames, jewellery and musical instruments.

In an effort to educate the public about the appalling realities of turtle culling, Tusk Force is to show on television in the Far East a video depicting a turtle being dismembered alive.

Conservationists concede that it is harder to protect wildlife at sea than on land. Despite the ten-year moratorium on the commercial killing of whales, some half a million dolphins and porpoises are slaughtered each year. The International Whaling Commission insists that it is powerless to stop the deaths, be it for sport, food, or fish bait, or the result of tens of thousands being caught accidentally in nets.

The fear now is that international commitment to the ban on whaling is waning and that the commission will decide that as some populations have recovered, then commercial whaling of some stocks should be permitted.

Neela Bettridge, the director of Tusk Force, said: "Once you give any kind of green light, the whale hunters will be back in business with a vengeance."

PLANET EARTH

The green turtle: nesting sites have sharply declined

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THE TIMES CHRISTMAS APPEAL TUSK FORCE

هكذا من الأصل

From swinging city to Euro-sceptics, '96 was an action replay

By Joe Joseph

CONTRARY to the old joke, 1996 proved that nostalgia *is* what it used to be.

For many people who were around in 1966, living through the past year was rather like being Bill Murray in the film *Groundhog Day*, waking every morning to spookily familiar experiences, newspaper headlines, sensations and even sadnesses.

For the first time in 30 years you could have walked out of your front door in a pink mini-skirt, covered your eyelids in Bible-black eye shadow and stepped into the seat of a newly designed Jaguar sports car that was the envy of the world, and nobody would have given you a second glance. Even if you were a man.

The government documents released today after 30 years in the vaults only confirm this sense of *déjà vu*. The aroma of 1966 has hung in the air all year.

The Beatles then were making the headlines at home and putting Britain in the news abroad, in the sort of way that Oasis and Pulp and the Britpop bands are doing today. *Newsweek's* recent hailing of London as the capital of cool is a startling echo of *Time* magazine's crowning of London in 1966 as "The Swinging City".

Fewer women may have offered to bear Bobby Charlton's babies than they did Alan Shearer's, but in other respects the Euro 96 football tournament reignited all the passions, if not quite all the England glory, of the 1966 World Cup. And London is not only the coolest cultural and fashion capital since the days of Carnaby Street, but the word "cool" has re-entered the language, not as blushingly self-conscious 1960s hippy talk, but as Establishment-fashionable.

In politics, the Labour Party has a leader who has spent the past 12 months painting a picture of a future Britain that is technologically clued-in and wired-up, evoking memories of Harold Wilson and his "white heat of technology" vision.

Tony Blair even has his own Marcia Williams. In fact, he has two: Peter Mandelson and Alastair Campbell.

In another echo, the newly released Cabinet documents show that British politicians were as vexed in 1966 about the threat to sovereignty by membership of the Common Market as they are now. The tide of Euro-scepticism appeared to be as strong then as anything that John Major has to face today.

The issues were given a formal airing during a Cabinet committee meeting at Chequers in October 1966 before Britain's formal application to join the Common Market.

Further abroad, politicians and diplomats have spent the past year speculating anxiously about Boris Yeltsin's health in much the way they spent 1966 wondering whether or not Mao Tse-tung would live long enough to reap the glory, or the havoc, of his newly launched Cultural Revolution.

And tragically, the Aberfan disaster of 1966 had a chilling reprise at Dunblane. It was in 1966 that *The Sound Of Music* won the Oscar for Best Film, concrete tower blocks began rising across the country, and Bob Dylan shocked his purist fans by turning up at the Albert Hall with an electric backup band.

They are all still with us. So are *The Who*, performing live on stage again.

Even sheepskin coats made a comeback. Fortunately, Sacha Distel didn't.

Bankers lost faith in Wilson's ideas as pound slumped

Reports by Valerie Elliott, Adrian Lee and Joe Joseph

HAROLD WILSON had lost the confidence of the banks within a few months of his 1966 election victory, confidential records released under the 30-year rule show.

With the economy in crisis, the Prime Minister hosted a private dinner party at 10 Downing Street for 18 prominent bankers where he faced stern questioning.

The minutes recorded on August 3 state: "The explanation [for the crisis] was to be found in a general malaise throughout the country stemming from the loss of empire and the lack of any idea to replace it." The bankers added: "There was a lack of confidence both at home and abroad in the Government and hence in sterling."

The bankers, among them the Governor of the Bank of England, believed the Labour Government was against them and the cure was "in a rebuilding of national confidence." They were critical of government policy and singled out overspending on social services.

Mr Wilson had clashed with the governor, Lord Cromer, in the run-up to the election in March. Lord Cromer had threatened to resign after the Prime Minister opposed a 1 per cent rise in interest rates.

Mr Wilson's attempts that year to shore up sterling led him to seek help from the Americans. A letter to President Johnson gave a warning that he [Wilson] might have to take tougher measures to stabilise the currency.

Some of his Cabinet colleagues, including George Brown, the Minister for Economic Affairs, were urging him to devalue. But Mr Wilson instead pushed through a package of deflationary measures. Minutes of a special Cabinet meeting in July noted "the prevailing lack of confidence in the British economy was due to a persisting doubt about our ability to pay our way".

Mr Wilson attempted to defuse the air of panic among some of his ministers and said: "It is important to distinguish between problems of reality and problems of confidence."

He also made clear that despite his concern over rising unemployment, "if it is a choice between full employment and devaluation, I will devalue." The Cabinet stalled a decision for a year and George Brown made clear that he reserved his position.

Among the measures introduced by Mr Wilson were hire purchase restrictions and a £50 limit for travellers taking sterling abroad.

Mr Wilson blamed the seamen's strike, low productivity and a truculent labour force for the nation's ills. He revealed in one meeting that he had considered, and rejected, raising the price of school meals and introducing prescription charges. The Prime Minister thought his prices and income freeze would have a "good moral effect".

But the economic picture continued to be bleak. In the summer, Lord Cromer warned the Prime Minister that sterling was in a critical situation after losing £78 million in value in two days.

In October, the Prime Minister confessed in a minute to his Chancellor that the imminent prospect of 500,000 people unemployed — despite his earlier assurances that half a million would be the upper limit — was "pretty horrifying" and he considered covertly restoring cuts in public investment.

But while a key plank of Labour's economic strategy was holding down wages, papers reveal that ministers were reluctant to make the ultimate sacrifice. At a Cabinet meeting where it was suggested that ministers might forgo some of their salaries, the conclusion was that "a voluntary gesture of this kind would not necessarily carry conviction".

☐ The threat to British sovereignty from membership of the Common Market was fiercely debated over the year.

The issues were aired during a Cabinet committee meeting in October before Britain's formal application to join the Common Market. Papers show that ministers were concerned about the power of the European Commission not only to enforce unpopular decisions but also to delay action Britain might wish to take.

Harold Wilson with Baroness Falkender, his former political secretary Marcia Williams, pictured in 1975

Personal tensions rise inside No 10

TENSIONS between Harold Wilson's formidable secretary Marcia Williams and official Downing Street staff are highlighted by a bureaucratic dispute over the right to use government photocopiers during the election campaign.

While Downing Street accepted that an official should accompany Mr Wilson on his election tour in March, officials were concerned that equipment should not be used for party political purposes. The dispute has all the hallmarks of recent debates over civil service neutrality.

In a note dated March 7, 1966, at the start of the election campaign, Derek Mitchell, a Treasury high flier who was Mr Wilson's principal private secretary, wrote: "The only problem not resolved is the one about the use of copying machines."

The dispute may have been fanned by the intense personal hostility between Mr Mitchell and Ms Williams, Mr Wilson's political secretary. But Mr Mitchell was absolutely insistent that if any official machines had to be used, a note should be kept of all copies so that the Labour Party headquarters could be charged.

In a separate note to Ms Williams, he suggested that the House of Commons rate of 4d (1.6p) a copy would be about the right charge.

But the issue was clearly galling for staff at No 10, and Mr Mitchell wrote to the Prime Minister: "It would obviously be better if use of the official machines could be made as a last resort and I am glad to hear that you are hoping to get one of your own. I am sure that would be a real convenience to you."

In another circular to staff at 10 Downing Street, Mr Mitchell announced that Mr Wilson had agreed to drop informal arrangements whereby messengers called at the party HQ, Transport House, to collect mail. In the note, Mr Mitchell said: "This is because it would be improper for civil servants to assist the party authorities in this way during the pre-election period."

With a note of prescience of Mr Wilson's victory at the poll, Mr Mitchell added: "The informal arrangement can, of course, be resumed after the election."

THE YEAR IN BRIEF

Mao's swim marathon a 'fiction'

Diplomatic speculation about the health of Mao Tse Tung reached a frenzy after he was photographed swimming in the Yangtse, allegedly covering 15 kilometres. In a detailed dispatch from the office of the the British chargé d'affaires in Peking, Leonard Appleyard said the Chinese were determined to show their leader in good health, and added: "We are now waiting for him to cover the same distance walking on the water." Chairman Mao survived for another 10 years and did not die until 1976, at the age of 82.

MI5 saw 'Red plot' in strike

MI5 reported strong links between the Communist Pary and activists in the National Union of Seamen, which was involved in a protracted strike against the Government's strict prices and incomes policy. The strike caused food shortages. A military plan was devised — though not enforced — to draft in 34,000 servicemen to move ships and run the docks.

Fear of mutiny saved Gurkhas

Harold Wilson considered disbanding the 14,000-strong Gurkha Brigade to save £9 million a year, but was warned by officials: "The possibility of mutiny cannot be ruled out. They are capable of strong and violent reactions if they feel they have been unfairly treated." The next year, plans were announced to reduce the brigade. It now numbers 4,000.

Attempt to block review of murder

The Home Secretary, Sir Frank Soskice, attempted to block a judicial review over the murder conviction of Timothy Evans, saying that such an inquiry would cause resentment among the police. A review concluded that Evans was "probably innocent" of killing his wife and daughter, for which he had had been executed in 1950. The Queen granted a free pardon.

BBC berated over fledgling channel

The Prime Minister was scathing about the fledgling BBC2 at a time when the corporation was £10 million in debt. In correspondence with the BBC, which wanted to raise the £5 television licence fee by £1, he wrote: "I do not see why we needed to raise the licence fee to pay for a programme no one wants to see and many cannot see even if they wanted to."

Beatles beat the drum for Britain

The success of five concerts by the Beatles in Tokyo in July 1966 delighted British officials. "They swept the youth of Japan off their feet," the chargé d'affaires at the embassy in Tokyo reported to the Foreign Office. "In sober truth, no recent event connected with the United Kingdom, with the sole exception of the British Exhibition in 1965, has made a comparable impact."

Alarm at callousness over Aberfan

A WHITEHALL suggestion that Harold Wilson's Government should say as little as possible about the Aberfan disaster was rejected by the Prime Minister. He noted in green ink on an official memo: "We must not look callous or complacent."

The documents chart a stream of meetings and discussions which began on October 22, the day after 116 children and 28 adults died when a coal pit's waste heap engulfed a school in a South Wales village. The discussions ended 11 months later when Lord Robens agreed to continue in his £12,500-a-year post as chairman of the National Coal Board.

The newly released files include some from 1967. Two weeks before an official inquiry's report on the disaster, civil servants proposed that the Government "say as little as possible" in response to the report and merely indicate that its findings would be carefully considered.

Mr Wilson noted on July 19: "I hope ministers will have agreed on something to say before publication. We must not look callous or complacent or in any way passing by on the other side. It is important to decide whether we 'accept' the report." He must have received an advance copy immediately after writing those words. He added at the bottom of the page: "I have now looked at the report. It is devastating."

Mr Wilson suggested that Cledwyn Hughes, the Secretary of State for Wales, should consider making a statement to the Commons before publication, paying tribute to the tribunal, giving the main findings and saying that the Government accepted them.

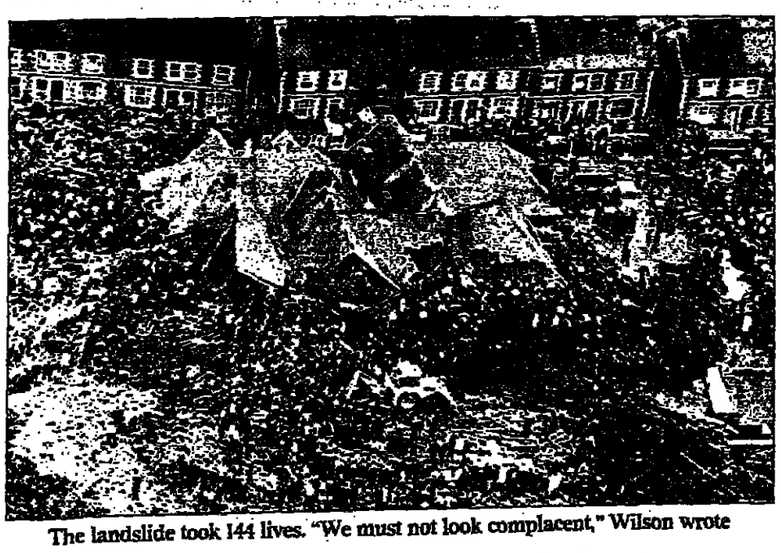
"Then say the tribunal makes a number of recommendations for future action, including legislation. The ministers concerned are urgently considering these recommendations," Mr Wilson wrote. "While it is exceptional to make a statement before publication, the fact that the House is adjourning [for the summer recess] — combined with the public concern and the devastating nature of the report — makes this desirable."

The Prime Minister effectively rejected a suggestion that the Government should accept Lord Robens's resignation. On July 28, a note recording the views of a group of ministers said the future of Lord Robens was bound to be "the centre of speculation" when the report was published, although it did not blame him personally. "Our conclusion ... is that the chairman may feel compelled to resign and that if he offers his resignation, the Government should accept it.

"There is not, in our view, a case against Lord Robens to justify his dismissal if he does not choose to resign. But he should not be pressed to stay."

Mr Wilson marked the final passage and wrote in the margin: "I don't see the need for [this]. It may be better to press Robens to hold an immediate meeting of the board to consider the report."

Lord Robens, who had been a Labour MP and fellow member of the postwar Labour Government with Mr Wilson, continued in the post until 1971. In 1993, aged 82, he died from a stroke.



The landslide took 144 lives. "We must not look complacent," Wilson wrote

Duke's trip survived Argy-bargy

IF THE Duke of Edinburgh is skilled today in the art of creating headaches for government ministers, that may be through long practice.

The Duke's desire to go on a long, costly polo tour of Argentina in the autumn of 1966 provoked backroom bickering in Downing Street and Whitehall as officials tried to work out how the Duke could meet the bills without breaching the Government's new austerity measures. These included a £50-a-head limit on cash that could be taken on a holiday abroad.

The Sir Humphreys of the day were sucked into a web of memos which betray their search for a palatable solution — allowing the Duke to attend the tournament without living like a backpacker, but also without offending the Queen's subjects, who were all tightening their belts.

Luckily, the Argentine Government was shouldering most of the costs of board and lodging for the visiting British and American teams. Some Whitehall officials feared a late cancellation would offend and with a little help from the embassy in Buenos Aires, coupled with the Duke's agreement to perform a few public duties to water down the jet-set elements of the trip, he was able to set off, with or without the Prime Minister's blessing.

Chi-Chi, right, and An-An during a tryst at London Zoo

Panda match was food for satire

DOWNING STREET and the Foreign Office were alarmed that attempts to mate London Zoo's Chi-Chi with a panda in Moscow would be used to satirise a forthcoming Soviet visit by Harold Wilson.

In 1964, the Soviet Union dropped a British proposal to match-make Chi-Chi and An-An. But two years later Madame Fortseva, the Soviet Minister of Culture, was keen to pair off the pandas at Moscow Zoo.

The British Government's chief scientific adviser, Sir Solly Zuckerman, wanted approval from Michael Stewart, then Foreign Secretary, for "what might well be construed as a further illustration of ice-breaking".

A Foreign Office note, headlined "Anglo-Soviet Relations: A Mate for Chi-Chi" and written by a Mr H. F. T. Smith, described the proposal to mate "the sex-starved female panda" Chi-Chi with An-An. "I am not sure the proposal is consistent with our policy of détente but we also have an interest in rapprochement. I recommend that this union be blessed," he wrote.

A more senior official, Mr Greenhill, gave warning of the comic potential: "I agree, but let us get this matter out of the headlines well before the Prime Minister goes to Moscow, otherwise the two visits will become mixed in the public mind and worked to death by the TV comics and satirists."

The Foreign Secretary scribbled: "Yes indeed!"

Sure enough, nine days later, on January 27, a cartoon in the *Daily Mirror* lampooned the situation.

England's World Cup victory strained relations with Argentina

WHILE the nation celebrated England's finest footballing hour, British diplomats found the World Cup something of a headache. The Foreign Office had to appease Argentina, which lost to the home side in a particularly acrimonious quarter-final. The surprise appearance of the North Koreans in the competition also caused concern.

Papers released today under the 30-year rule show how England's victory over the South American side raised feelings to a point where relations between the two countries could have been badly damaged. England won the match 1-0 after the Argentine captain, Antonio Rattin, was sent off by the German referee at Wembley in an exceptionally ill-tempered game. Afterwards Alf Ramsey, the England manager, described the Argentinians as "animals" and Fifa, the sport's ruling body, issued them with an official reprimand.

However, a dispatch from the British Embassy in Buenos Aires describes how the Argentine team was given a hero's welcome on their return. While thousands waited two hours in the rain to give the side a "tumultuous" homecoming, the embassy received "hundreds" of abusive phone calls. Demonstrators gathered at the ambassador's house and extra guards had to be posted at a trade fair after gangs of youths "chanting and jeering" invaded the British stand, tore up photographs and pinned a woman receptionist in a corner.

The dispatch notes that even the more balanced Argentine newspapers were claiming that the World Cup had been snatched from their team by the German referee, whose appointment was part of a "blatant conspiracy to defraud the South Americans" and keep the trophy in Europe. "Most Argentinians quite sincerely believe that the way the whole tournament was managed, or mismanaged, was a dirty business and a stain on the British reputation for sportsmanship and honesty," the dispatch said.

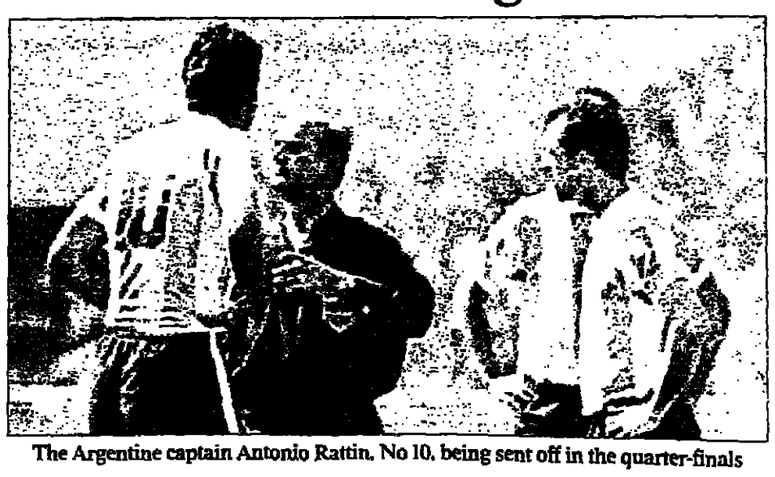
"While it would be a mistake to take all this too seriously, it will certainly not be laughed off or preached about. It will not upset our normal good relations with the great majority of sensible Argentinians, but it has left a scar on our popular image which we shall not fail to be reminded of whenever, for one reason or another in the future, feelings become strained."

However, it was not just the Argentinians who caused the Foreign Office concern. The qualification of Communist North Korea for the finals threatened to spark a diplomatic incident. South Korea protested vigorously through its Ambassador in London, claiming that the team should not be allowed to set foot on British soil.

The Foreign Office agonised over when the North Korean flag could be flown and the country's national anthem sung.

Moreover, the North Koreans confounded the Football Association by beating Italy to win a place in the quarter-finals.

"Thank heaven that Portugal finally dispatched the giant killers and we were spared an England/North Korea match at Wembley," one official noted after the North Koreans had been beaten.



The Argentine captain Antonio Rattin, No 10, being sent off in the quarter-finals

SATURDAY

IN THE TIMES

STRANGE FRUIT

Ginny Dougary meets Jeanette Winterson

in the **Magazine**

TV DINNERS

Frances Bissell on how to be a telly-chef

in **Weekend**

Israel and PLO put finishing touches to Hebron accord

BY ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

AFTER agreeing on terms for its withdrawal from most of Hebron, Israel yesterday continued to haggle with the Palestine Liberation Organisation over prisoner releases and target dates for future West Bank handovers, Palestinian negotiators said.

At the same time, Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, postponed his proposed summit with Yassir Arafat, President of the Palestinian Authority, to deal with more pressing concerns, especially the safe passage through the Knesset of his austerity budget. Palestinian officials were told that the meeting could take place today.

Earlier, Mr Arafat said he was ready to meet Mr Netanyahu to seal an accord transferring 80 per cent of Hebron to Palestinian rule.

The remaining differences between the two sides include Mr Arafat's demand for a joint Palestinian police presence around the Tomb of the Patriarchs, the burial place of Abraham and Sarah. The shrine is holy to both Muslims and Jews. Mr Arafat is also demanding that Israel commit itself to a timetable for further troop redeployments in rural areas of the West Bank.

Dr Dore Gold, Mr Netanyahu's diplomatic adviser, and other Israeli officials said last night that there was now little left for the negotiators to do, adding that the time had come for the leaders to hold another summit and complete the accord. "We have exhausted the negotiations. If there are differences, they should be discussed between the leaders themselves," one of Mr Netanyahu's aides said.

Mr Netanyahu has seemed isolated in recent days by a series of developments in his parliament aimed not just at his peace proposals, but at his plans for a Thatcherite economic revolution, including budget cuts and privatisation. In addition, with six members of his Cabinet now prepared to vote against the Hebron deal, Mr Netanyahu threw out a challenge to his critics. He announced that he would bring the agreement before the Knesset for approval in order to achieve a broader consensus. At the same time, officials of the right-wing Likud Party are trying to minimise the clear lack of enthusiasm among his own supporters for the deal.

They recalled the example of the late Prime Minister Menachem Begin, also a Likud leader, who made peace with Egypt. At the time Mr Begin was also forced to rely on the support of the opposition Labour Party to secure approval for the Camp David accords.

Tensions remained high in Hebron yesterday and Palestinian youths scuffled with Jewish settlers. Earlier in the day some settlers broke into a Palestinian market area, claiming it was Jewish property. Some were detained but later released.

In a separate development yesterday, Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam of Syria said Washington had given Syria "written commitments" to secure an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights. Mr Khaddam also ruled out a resumption of Syrian-Israeli peace negotiations as long as the Israeli Government did not change its hard-line position.

Israeli warplanes launched rockets against suspected guerrilla targets in the hills ofsouthern Lebanon last night, guerrilla and pro-Israeli militia sources said.

☐ **Trial opens**: The trial of four Israeli right-wing extremists accused of inciting racial hatred opened in Jerusalem yesterday. They published a book, *Baruch, a Real Man*, that allegedly glorifies Baruch Goldstein, the American-born Jewish settler who opened fire during Friday prayers in Hebron's Al-Ibrahimi Mosque in 1994, killing 29 Palestinians. *(AFP)*

GREG MARINOVICH/AP

Palestinian policemen train in the West Bank village of Dahariya yesterday. They will be deployed in Hebron after the partial withdrawal of Israeli security forces under an agreement said to be close last night

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Saddam turns on family in fear of betrayal

BY MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

PRESIDENT Saddam Hussein of Iraq is now so afraid there are traitors within his family that he is relying increasingly on non-relatives to be his closest political advisers, according to intelligence sources.

The dominant group in the ruling hierarchy around the Iraqi leader now includes two cousins. The remainder have no family connection.

The attempted assassination of his son Uday on December 12 has underlined the potential threat to a regime which Saddam has established over the years to sustain his rule.

The Takriti clan, which in the past has been the bedrock for Saddam's survival, has never been so divided. Two of the groups within the clan, the Ibrahimis, which includes his three brothers, and the Majidis, cousins on his father's side, are reported to hate Saddam and his two sons, Uday and Kousai.

Kousai, the younger son, heads Saddam's security apparatus. The Iraqi regime has at least five security and intelligence bodies, each of which has overlapping powers. Kousai Saddam controls them all. He also commands the Republican Guards whose main task is to protect the regime.

For many years, Saddam used his three brothers on his mother's side, Sabawi, Watban and Barazan, to help to prop up his regime. They occupied key positions in the leadership.

However, two of the brothers, Sabawi, former head of the Iraqi national security forces, and Watban, a former Minister of the Interior, were dismissed last year and accused by Saddam of corruption, exploitation of state property for personal purposes, cruelty and extortion. Barazan, formerly chief of Iraqi intelligence, was sacked recently and is now Baghdad's Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva. According to intelligence sources, the main group of political advisers around the Iraqi President include Sultan Hashem Ahmad, formerly the army Chief of Staff and now the Defence Minister, who has no political ambitions. Muhammad Amer Rashid, a former Deputy Minister of Industry and now the Petroleum Minister, and Amer Hamoudi Hasan al-Saadi, Saddam's adviser on industry who also serves as the President's representative for clandestine missions.

The two cousins who remain in the inner circle are Abdul Hamid Mahmoud, Saddam's personal secretary and chief of the apparatus responsible for his security, and Mouzahem Saab al-Hasan al-Takriti, chairman of the committee supervising the Fedayin of Saddam organisation, whose function is the defence of Iraq and achievements of "the revolution".

The intelligence sources said that Sajida Kheiralla Tilfah, Saddam's wife and mother of Uday and Kousai, was currently under house arrest after the Iraqi President accused her of trying to assassinate him.

The sources said: "Saddam has succeeded in turning his family against him, despite the benefits of power they enjoyed and their common interest that he retains the leadership."

Saddam: accused wife

Paris-Madrid pact keeps Eta in check

FROM TUNKU VARADARAJAN IN SAN SEBASTIÁN

A NEW anti-terrorist alliance between Spain and France has ensured that 1996 will go down as the year in which Eta, the Basque separatist group, suffered its leanest period for almost a quarter of a century.

The arrest yesterday of five Eta radicals, members of a youth group dedicated to street violence in Navarre, only bolsters the belief that the Spanish police could at last have Eta on the ropes.

Five people have been killed by Eta in the past 12 months, fewer than in any year since 1972, when the group had barely begun its violent campaign for an independent Basque state. At the peak of its powers, Eta murdered 119 people in 1979 and 123 in 1980.

With a flurry of blows, including the arrest of six leading terrorists in the past six months, the French police have boosted the morale of their Spanish counterparts. These successes flow from an unprecedentedly close collaboration between the Spanish and French governments, which began last May when a conservative administration took office in Madrid.

The French have not always been so helpful to Madrid and the Basque separatist group historically has used southern France as a refuge.

French governments, until very recently, mistrusted Spain's judicial system, never believing that it had been purged entirely of ills from the Franco era. In addition, the "Basque problem" tended to be viewed in Paris with a certain romanticism, also a hangover from the age of the Spanish dictatorship. François Mitterrand and, before him, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, played cat and mouse with Spain, offering only lukewarm collaboration in the fight against Eta.

BENEATH THE ICE

The chill that Europeans should really worry about

All Europe has been "sent to Siberia" for New Year, 1997. So deep a freeze has, for most British people, a frisson of pleasure about it; pictured from the well-warmed house, the images of Venice's frozen lagoon and the snow-laden palm-trees of Mediterranean resorts compensate in poetry for the treachery of icy roads and pavements and lend drama to the mere grey gloom of a typical British January. Further east, in Hungary where the thermometer dipped this week to a 76-year low or in fuel-starved Bulgaria and Romania, such temperatures are a matter of dread, of frostbite for many and death for society's most vulnerable.

Yet when the meteorological thaw comes, the prospects in most of Central and Eastern Europe look brighter than for many years. It is in Western Europe, where in 1990 forecasters enthused about the "European decade" to come, that winter gnaws deep into society's bones and electorates readily take the frozen ground as a metaphor for economic stagnation and the impotence or incompetence of politicians. France's Jacques Chirac, who yesterday lectured his compatriots that their gloom was irrational, is not alone in his frustration at their refusal to take comfort in sharply reduced inflation, somewhat improved public finances and the vote of confidence offered by Europe's booming stockmarkets. John Major, with better reason since Britain is now Western Europe's star economic performer, waits in vain for his political dividend. But until unemployment retreats from its current postwar record, "feel-good" sermons are a waste of breath.

In France, 12.7 per cent are now on the official jobless roster — and Insée, the national statistical institute, expects this to rise to 13 per cent this year. Italy is nearly as badly off overall — and much worse off in the impoverished south. Spain's problems make Italy's seem light. Germany, where for historical reasons joblessness has a specially sharp impact on the national psyche, has more than four million on the dole. In Sweden, if extensive state make-work schemes were excluded the official rate of 8 per cent would nearly double, to 15 per cent.

This last statistic underlines a troubling truth. With European Union governments spending £130 billion a year on employment-related schemes, it has never been more evident that state efforts at direct job-creation work against the grain of the markets which it should be the concern of governments to set free. It diverts energy from what the State can do: temper the violence of economic cycles by expanding deficits in recession and tightening policy as growth picks up; and increase labour flexibility by overhauling social welfare systems. But in most EU countries, macro-economic flexibility has been sacrificed to the political goal of meeting the 1999 target for EMU. The pain of public belt-tightening at a time of low growth meanwhile makes workers more reluctant than ever to surrender benefits which they see as their remaining cushion against the new insecurity.

"Europe" is increasingly seen as a straitjacket, with severe consequences including the growing popularity of extremist parties. Seeing this, some in France, such as Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, architect of the EMS, would now sacrifice the *franc fort* for higher growth. This week Gerhard Schröder, a contender for leadership of the German Social Democrat Party, also broke ranks to say that "incredible social and political friction" is too high a price for EMU. But such dissent is still rare: Europe's politicians cling to EMU with the fatalism of early Christian martyrs. The EU is the drop-out in a global economy which is expected to grow this year by a healthy 4.1 per cent. When its politicians finally feel the icicles down their spines, it will be time to celebrate the arrival of a new year; not before.

LIEDER WRITER

Two hundred years ago: a great songwriter first filled his lungs

Judged by normal standards Franz Schubert was a dismal failure. The 12th of 18 children born into a penniless Viennese schoolmaster's family, he lived most of his life in squalid poverty — unemployed, scrounging off friends. Attempts to sell his music ended in fiasco. The only public concert of his music in his lifetime produced not a single review; Paganini was playing in town on the same night. Even Schubert's love life was a sad business, emotionally unstable and medically disastrous. Whether syphilis hastened his death from typhoid at 31 is disputed but it certainly led to the black depressions that clouded his last years.

All of which proves only one thing: genius cannot be judged by normal standards. On January 31, the 200th anniversary of Schubert's birth, the world will celebrate not a failure, but the greatest songwriter of all: a man incapable of breathing without composing, and incapable of composing without spinning a golden thread of melody.

Considering how rarely Schubert received a commission, the vast amount of music he produced in his short life is astonishing. There are nine symphonies (including two, the sublime *Unfinished* and the majestic *Great C Major*, that rank with the best); nine operas; dozens of choral works; and a huge quantity of wonderful chamber pieces.

But his 600 songs must take precedence. They were dashed off at a feverish rate. During 1815 alone, while Europe's more militant spirits were slogging it out in the Belgian mud, the teenage Schubert wrote 144 superb songs, including eight in a day. Pop groups who think they are being wildly creative if they produce an album's worth of songs in a year should take note. So fast did tunes come to Schubert that he often ran out of lyrics. He set his favourite Goethe and Schiller poems up to six times each.

Before he came along, the song was regarded as a lightweight form. Schubert showed that it could carry deep emotions without sacrificing its melodic grace or miniature essence. And his songs took music to the heart of the Romantic movement.

Like much Romantic art, they portray life as a journey through landscape. But Schubert's is a landscape of aural memory, in which familiar sounds — the huntsman's horn, a stream, the wind in trees — take on profound spiritual significance. Schubert was the first songwriter to realise that music need not slavishly mirror the words it accompanies; indeed, it may be at its most unsettling when it evokes something quite contrary to the surface meaning.

Nowhere is this power to disturb at a subliminal level more evident than in his last song-cycle, *Winterreise*: a poet's surreal journey across a frozen landscape towards death. It is one of the great testaments of despair, and its influence extends deep into our own century's music, in the troubled symphonies of Mahler and Shostakovich and the harrowing operas of Alban Berg.

It ends with the sound of an organ-grinder churning out a tawdry little scrap of a tune. In his darkest moments Schubert, who knew neither fame nor fortune nor lasting love, must have felt himself to be that organ-grinder: a missing person whom nobody misses, shuffling along a road to oblivion in a bleak midwinter. But the tunes of this organ-grinder have echoed across the continents and down the centuries. Two hundred years on, Schubert's heavenly melodies live more securely in the hearts of music-lovers than he would ever have dared to hope.

AULD FREDDIE FRINTON

For the Germans, New Year means Dinner for One

For the puritan English New Year's Day brings new calendars and a resolution to practise giving up things for Lent. All the British see New Year in by simulating a knowledge of the other verses of *Auld Lang Syne* and by men in kilts crooning and jigging on television. For Scots Hogmanay now entails carrying bottles of whisky instead of lumps of coal in their overcoat pockets into other people's homes. And making their calls by taxi. And so for most natives New Year comes in with a hangover, which may still be being worked on north of the border this morning on Ne'er Day. But for the Germans new year means Freddie Frinton.

For this forgotten English music hall comedian's film, *Dinner for One*, has become a cult of the German new year festivities. By switching channels on television a serious German celebrant of New Year's Eve can view his film over and over again until midnight. It lasts only 17 minutes. And it tells a simple tale.

Miss Sophy is celebrating her 90th birthday with a party for her admirers. But they are all dead. So her butler stands in for each of them in turn, as well as serving a sort of Mad Butler's Tea Party. As Admiral Von Schneider he clicks his heels, as Mr Winterbottom he raises his glass, as Mr Pomeroy he gazes amorously at his hostess. And he has to drink his toasts in sherry, champagne, and other wines and spirits at the rate of four glasses to every one of Miss Sophy's. Not surprisingly he stumbles over the tiger skin rug as he brings in each new course. And after dinner, as he staggers up the stairs with Miss Sophy in his arms, he asks her deadpan whether it is to be the same procedure this year as usual.

The point of any anniversary ritual is that it should be the same every year. So the German businessman who saw *Dinner for One* as a music hall sketch on Blackpool pier 33 years ago, and had it filmed as a typical example of English humour, was creating an instant tradition. It combines the necessary elements of nostalgia, sentimentality and northern over-indulgence for the ending of the year. It confirms stereotypes about British class and reticence as satisfactorily as *'Allo 'Allo* did about German and French manners for British viewers.

All traditions were once new. The Christmas tree and stockings were imported by our German monarchs and their consorts. Goose rather than turkey is the more traditional new year bird. But in our electronic age, the traditions of the future are continually being created on our screens and tapes. So, just for a change next new year, British and German programme planners should exchange Freddie Frinton for Morecambe and Wise and *The Sound of Music*. National stereotypes should laugh at themselves once in a while. Because everyone else does.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Invitation to pray for Africa in 1997

From the Director of the United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and others

Sir, We write as a group of individuals from (or deeply involved in) Africa, who are working in our various ways in support of conflict resolution, economic and social justice and the realisation of basic human rights standards everywhere in that great continent.

We are also believers in the power of prayer and we would like, through your columns, to invite people of any faith to join with us — preferably each day — in 1997 to pray for Africa in these simple words:

God bless Africa;
Guard her people;
Guide her rulers;
And give her peace.

Yours sincerely,
MALCOLM HARPER,
Director, United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,
CHARLES AMONE,
International Welfare Association,
ALEXANDER BORG OLIVIER,
United Nations Office and Information Centre, London,
KEITH CLEMENTS,
Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland,
†TREVOR HUDDLESTON,
WANJIRU KIHORO,
Abantu for Development,
MICHAEL TAYLOR,
Christian Aid,
3 Whitehall Court, SW1.
December 30.

PoWs in Italy

From Mr J. Keith Killby

Sir, Major Sam Derry (Obituary, December 27), Monsignor O'Flaherty, the British Minister to the Vatican and his "Figaro" of a butler all did excellent work hiding and provisioning Allied PoWs in Rome after the Italian Armistice of September 1943.

However, thousands of PoWs "on the run" in Italy kept to the remote countryside. Some 3,000 of us escaped from a camp near the Adriatic coast two or three days after the Armistice. Within 24 hours we all, it seemed, had been spontaneously hidden and fed by the Italian countrypeople.

To record and, in a small way, to compensate for that generosity and courage, the Monte San Martino Trust was founded by former PoWs to give study bursaries in this country to young Italians. In six years some sixty bursaries have been awarded, mostly to descendants of those who helped us — four of whom had grandparents shot for so doing.

Yours very truly,
J. KEITH KILLBY
(Honorary Secretary),
Monte San Martino Trust,
Flat 7, 18 Lambolle Road, NW3.
December 27.

Fair shares in business

From Mr John Argenti

Sir, I am at a loss to understand what the Centre for Tomorrow's Company is saying ("Boardrooms too biased towards the shareholders", report, Business, December 30). Are they suggesting that a company should not be run for the benefit of the shareholders (ie, with just one bottom line) but for the benefit of all the stakeholders — in other words with five bottom lines, one each for the employees, the customers, the shareholders, the suppliers and the community? What a nightmare.

The idea that companies "should be run for all concerned" has always been highly seductive; but, with few exceptions, several decades of nationalisation, communes, kibbutzim, mutuals, co-operatives, communism and the "social market" generally suggest that, for reasons too numerous to mention here, it simply does not work. Heaven protect us from another experiment on these lines.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN ARGENTI,
Pettistree Lodge,
Woodbridge, Suffolk.
December 30.

Melting pots

From Mr Richard and Mr Peter Harden

Sir, It is a shame that self-confessed New Yorker, Mr Irwin Stelzer ("A tale of gastronomy in two cities", December 19) compares the restaurant culture of the Big Apple with a London which does not exist.

Anyone who says, for example, that "Londoners' infatuation with Thai cooking is attributable in good part to the opening here of New York's Vong" might fairly be asked to explain how it is that the effect preceded its alleged cause by about half a decade.

And anyone who largely blames service deficiencies on the fact that many London staff "come from Italy, where casualness has a meaning all its own" seems oblivious to the melting pot of nationalities represented by London's waiting staff (among which Italians seem nowadays to be, if anything, under-represented).

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD HARDEN,
PETER HARDEN
(Editors), *Harden's Guides*,
29 Villiers Street, WC2.
December 23.

Welfare of the child paramount in adoption process

From Professor Emeritus John Triseliotis

Sir, The Prime Minister's plea to privatise adoption (report, December 27) will do nothing more than replace the antics of a handful of politically correct individuals with political doctrine, none of which has anything to do with the welfare of children.

For over twenty years now and because of social and demographic changes very few babies are being adopted each year. This is unlikely to change.

Britain, however, has possibly the best record anywhere, and certainly compared with continental Europe, in the way it has found permanent adoptive homes for older children and children with special needs. This has largely been due to the dedication of thousands of committed social workers, in both voluntary and local authority social services departments, who developed new skills and new ways of helping children to start a new life in new families. The research evidence about these achievements is irrefutable.

The example from the United States, where independent and third party adoptions have been allowed to flourish, has exposed the exploitation and sometimes covert sale of children to an extent only surpassed by some developing countries.

Adoption policy and practice need to be based on what is empirically known to be good for children, rather than what is seen to be good for the market and the interests of the adults. A return to the abuses of the last century is not the answer. The answer is to consolidate and build on the achievements so far.

Yours faithfully,
J. TRISELIOTIS
(International Social Sciences Institute,
University of Edinburgh),
20 Braid Farm Road,
Edinburgh 10.
December 30.

From Mr Malcolm Hanney

Sir, You report Sir William Utting as saying that the adoption process ought to be carried out by government and not delegated to other authorities. This appears to me somewhat blinkered.

My wife and I adopted our children when we were living in the United States. We worked through a charitable organisation that put the interests of the child first, those of the birthmother second, and of the adoptive parents third. The birthmother had a real say in who would be the parents of her child. In such circumstances, adoption can represent a real alternative to abortion which, as you report (December 28), was a choice taken by 170,000 women in the UK last year.

As a councillor on Bath and North East Somerset Council and a member of its adoption and fostering panel, I know how complex the issues of children in care and adoption are. I do not believe that the current arrangements should never be reviewed or questioned but we must be careful not to allow political correctness to have an undue influence.

The comments of the Professor of Social Work at East Anglia University, that giving up a baby for adoption can present long-term mental health problems and "has a similar impact to being sexually assaulted", are depressing to say the least. Adoption has, unfortunately, become a less straightforward option than abortion for a pregnant woman unable or unwilling to keep her child.

My wife and I will try to convey to our children (now aged 6 and 3) how difficult it was for their birthmothers to go through pregnancy when the choice of abortion was available, and to choose and trust us to be the adoptive parents of their children. We can only hope that our children, when they are older, will love and respect their birthmothers for making that choice and giving them life.

Yours faithfully,
MALCOLM HANNEY,
Magna House, Battle Lane,
Chew Magna, Somerset.
December 31.

Royal engagements

From Mr Tim O'Donovan

Sir I have carried out a survey of the official engagements undertaken by the Royal Family during 1996, as reported in the Court Circular:

	A	B	C	D	E
The Queen	155	79	275	509	76
Duke of Edinburgh	172	149	43	364	255
Queen Mother	28	11	19	58	-
Prince of Wales	227	87	103	417	164
Duke of York	52	13	11	76	53
Prince Edward	49	44	22	115	55
Princess Royal	307	113	94	514	93
Princess Margaret	86	22	6	114	18
Duke of Gloucester	107	30	14	151	76
Duchess of Gloucester	87	26	15	128	18
Duke of Kent	136	45	25	206	51
Duchess of Kent	53	6	6	65	10
Princess Alexandra	86	21	12	119	7

A official visits, opening ceremonies and other engagements
B receptions, lunches, dinners and banquets
C other engagements, including investitures, meetings attended and audiences given
D total number of engagements in UK
E engagements on official overseas tours.

Twenty-eight engagements by the Princess of Wales were recorded in the Court Circular, prior to the decree absolute of her divorce, declared on August 28.

The Royal Family carried out a total of 3,712 official engagements at home and overseas. Charities are important beneficiaries of this work: for example, the Prince of Wales's charities raised £20 million this year for underprivileged young people, the homeless and disabled.

It must not be forgotten that, in addition to the duration of these engagements, there is also the time taken in preparation, whether it be a visit, investiture or speech.

Except for Christmas Day and Easter Day, the Queen effectively never has a day off from the official red boxes which pursue her everywhere. Again, the Queen Mother has continued to work at the remarkable age of 96.

Overseas visits are packed with engagements. In the case of the Queen's and Prince Philip's visit to Thailand in October, five gruelling days were spent in heat and humidity, with no time to acclimatise: tough going for two people who are well over normal retirement age.

Yours faithfully,
TIM O'DONOVAN,
Mariners,
The Avenue, Datchet, Berkshire.
December 31.

Royal succession

From Mr Stuart Dunsford

Sir, It is doubtful whether Kaiser Wilhelm II would really have succeeded to the British throne in August 1901 had Lord Archer's proposed rules for the royal succession been in place (letters, December 17, 20, 26).

Under these rules the Princess Royal, as the eldest of Queen Victoria's children, would indeed have been heir to the throne, but it is unlikely that, as the heir, she would have been married to a prince in line of succession to the Prussian crown.

She would have remained in Britain being prepared for her destiny, as was her mother before her accession. Any marriage would probably have been to a minor prince, who would be agreeable to spending the rest of his life in this country.

Yours faithfully,
STUART DUNSFORD,
183 Sheen Lane, East Sheen, SW14.
December 30.

Profit margin

From Mr Gerhard Both, CEng, MIMechE

Sir, I have been looking for a long time for such a good example of the private sector's greed for profit as that presented by your report "Eritrea labours to put historic railway back on the tracks" (December 21).

A private consortium (of "experts"?) presented the Eritrean Government with an estimate of £250 million for the restoration of the railway; public ownership managed to do the job successfully with only £3 million.

A mark-up of more than 8,000 per cent by private enterprise? I am not surprised. In my own experience this is not too unusual.

Yours sincerely,
G. BOTH,
6 Newick Close,
Seaford, East Sussex.
December 24.

Gulf War illness

From Mr Tam Dalyell, MP for Linlithgow (Labour)

Sir, If Earl Baldwin of Bewdley and the former Speaker and their co-signatories (letter, December 28) had glanced through Hansard they would have noticed that the Opposition Defence Spokesman, David Clark, first raised what is now known as Gulf War syndrome on June 10, 1993. Moreover the Gulf War Veterans Association was formed as a result of a meeting in his office in mid-1994.

If there is to be "credit" it should go to the GWVA. True, the Countess of Mar had asked many questions on sheep-dip and organophosphates, mentioning a possible connection with Gulf War syndrome, in a Lords debate on December 12, 1994. On December 20, 1994, Mrs Edwina Currie had a Commons adjournment debate specifically devoted to Gulf War illness.

I was only one of a number of MPs of all parties who not only put questions but saw ministers about individual constituency cases of illness resulting from service in the Gulf.

It is simply preposterous to suggest that the House of Lords "made the running". They didn't. Members of the Commons did.

Yours etc,
TAM DALYELL,
House of Commons.

Message of hope

From Mr Simon Bird

Sir, I am very pleased that during the last few weeks *The Times* has given space to issues in which I am involved and which are close to my heart: the Alpha course originating from Holy Trinity, Brompton; the Family Caring Trust parenting course; and further debate of abortion issues. But I was particularly touched by the leading article on Christmas Eve, which gave a sensitive and moving account of the truth, significance and relevance of Jesus's birth.

The press is often criticised for fuelling a decline in society's values by its negative and destructive slant. But in these instances *The Times* is to be congratulated for giving publicity to some of the means by which, in my view, a whole and healthy society may be created by renewed relationships with God and in the home.

Yours sincerely,
SIMON BIRD,
71 Wilderness Road,
Earley, Reading, Berkshire.
December 30.

Mormon success

From Mr Julian Bell

Sir, Giles Whittell's report from Salt Lake City, "Mormons prosper as pews and coffers fill" (December 26), is a gross misrepresentation of what by his own admission is "one of the fastest-growing creeds in the world". His constant references to "financial profitability" as a motivating force behind the Mormon leaders is an insult to the ten million members worldwide.

As a lifelong British Mormon I have received back from the church infinitely more than I have ever given (yes, I do pay tithing), both spiritually and financially.

In the morally bankrupt society we find ourselves in, I would have thought a financially solvent and morally steadfast church should be welcomed with open arms.

Perhaps this accounts for the Mormons' success.

Yours sincerely,
JULIAN BELL,
221 Noel Road, West Acton, W3.
December 27.

Forever young?

From Mr Christopher Godley

Sir, I was delighted to read the letter from my father, Lord Kilbracken, on the subject of "fathers who smoke" (December 30). In it, he describes himself as a smoking father with young children.

Tomorrow is my 52nd birthday!

Yours etc,
CHRISTOPHER GODLEY,
Four Firs, Marley Lane,
Haslemere, Surrey.
New Year's Eve.

Young as you feel

From Mr Robert A. Crawford

Sir, Mr Donald Cross (letter, December 19) raises a matter of relativity over the term "elderly" for a man of 62. I, 77, am asked to fill Help the Aged envelopes.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT A. CRAWFORD,
8 Acacia Avenue,
Ruislip, Middlesex.

Gas and gaiters

From Mr W. Woodruff

Sir, Replying to a complaint, a letter I received from British Gas starts: "Further to our convocation on 10 December".

Well, I suppose it might work.

Yours in faith,
W. WOODRUFF,
Great Oaks, 36 Court Road,
Ickenham, Middlesex.
December 24.

Fully furnished

From Mr S. B. C. Evelegh

Sir, Conjugating *mensa* (the table not the organisation), aged 8, I wondered at the need for a vocative, believing it unlikely that any sane person would address furniture.

Years later, working for the planning committee of an inner-London borough, I realised how prescient the Romans were (letters, December 18, 23 and 30).

Yours faithfully,
SHAUN EVELEGH,
Cairnbrook,
Fairy Road, Seaview,
Isle of Wight.
December 30.

Sands of time

From Miss Gillian Ross

Sir, It is, I fear, true that the older one gets, the quicker time passes. "Infinitesimal" is the only way I can describe the gap between the end of one football season and the start of the next.

But wait — in the space of what seemed no longer than 24 hours "leaves on the line" became "the wrong type of snow".

Time is slipping away before my very eyes.

Yours etc,
GILLIAN A. ROSS,
20 Turners Meadow Way,
Beckenham, Kent.
December 30.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 0171-782 5046.

SOCIAL NEWS

Prince Edward, as Patron, will attend a concert given by the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall on Sunday, January 5.

New Year's Day birthdays

Dr Jack Birks, company chairman, 77; Lord Colwyn, 55; Sir James Crane, former HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary, 76; Mr John Fuller, writer, 60; Lord Kingsland, QC, 55; Baroness Lloyd of Highbury, 69; Sir Albert McQuarrie, former MP, 79; Dr James Merriman, former chairman, National Computing Centre, 82; Mr James Moorhouse, MEP, 73; Colonel P.A. Porteous, VC, 79; Mrs Patience Purdy, former president, National Council of Women of Great Britain, 68; Professor R.A. Raphael, FRS, chemist, 76; Mr Lawrence Rowe, cricketer, 48; Mr J.D. Salinger, author, 78; Lord Swansea, 72.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Lorenzo de Medici (The Magnificent), Florence, 1449; Katherine Philips, poet, London, 1631; Paul Revere, American patriot, Boston, Massachusetts, 1735; Maria Edgeworth, novelist, Blackbourton, Oxfordshire, 1767; Arthur Hugh Clough, poet, Liverpool, 1819; Sir James Frazer, anthropologist, Glasgow, 1854; Henry Handel Richardson (penname of Ethel Florence Lindesay), novelist, Melbourne, 1870; E.M. Forster, novelist, London, 1879; William Fox, film producer, Hungary, 1879; Martin Niemoller, anti-Nazi priest, Lippstadt, Germany, 1892; J. Edgar Hoover, founder of the FBI, Washington, 1895; H.A.R. (Kim) Philby, British double agent, Ambala, India, 1911; Jack de Manio, broadcaster, 1914.

DEATHS: William Wycherley, dramatist, London, 1716; James Francis Edward Stuart, the "Old Pretender", Rome, 1766; Johann Christian Bach, composer, London, 1782; Heinrich Hertz, physicist, Bonn, 1894; Sir Edwin Lutyens, architect, London, 1944; Maurice Chevalier, actor and singer, Paris, 1972; John Aloysius Costello, Prime Minister of Ireland 1948-51 and 1954-57, 1976.

The Daily Universal Register (renamed *The Times* on January 1, 1788), was founded, 1785.

Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland came into force, 1801.

The Commonwealth of Australia was established with Edmund Barton as the first prime minister, 1901.

Farthing ceased to be legal tender, 1961.

Britain entered the Common Market, 1973.

Church of Scotland

Introduction

The Rev John Birrell, to full-time Chaplain at Perth Royal Infirmary.

Ordination and induction

The Rev Jennifer Booth, Part-time Associate to South Leith, Edinburgh.

The Rev Linda J Broadley to Caputh, Clunie and Kinclaven.

The Rev Dennis S Rose, to Kirkmahoe.

Translations

The Rev A David K Arnott, from Netherlee, Glasgow to Hope Park, St Andrews.

The Rev Kevin MacKenzie, from Ochiltree w Stair to Westwood, East Kilbride.

The Rev Harry J Brown, from Benholm and Johnshaven w Garvock St Cyrus to Menzieshill, Dundee.

Retirements

The Rev H Marshall Gibson, from St Thomas' Gallowgate, Glasgow.

The Rev Peter Youngson, from St Andrew's, Kirriemuir.

The Rev Alexander Muir, from Carinish.

The Rev Philip Earnshaw, from Pollokshields, Glasgow.

The Rev John M M Macarthur, from St Columba, Glasgow.

The Rev Gilbert Thomson, from Christ's Kirk, Glenrothes.

Auxiliary Minister ordained

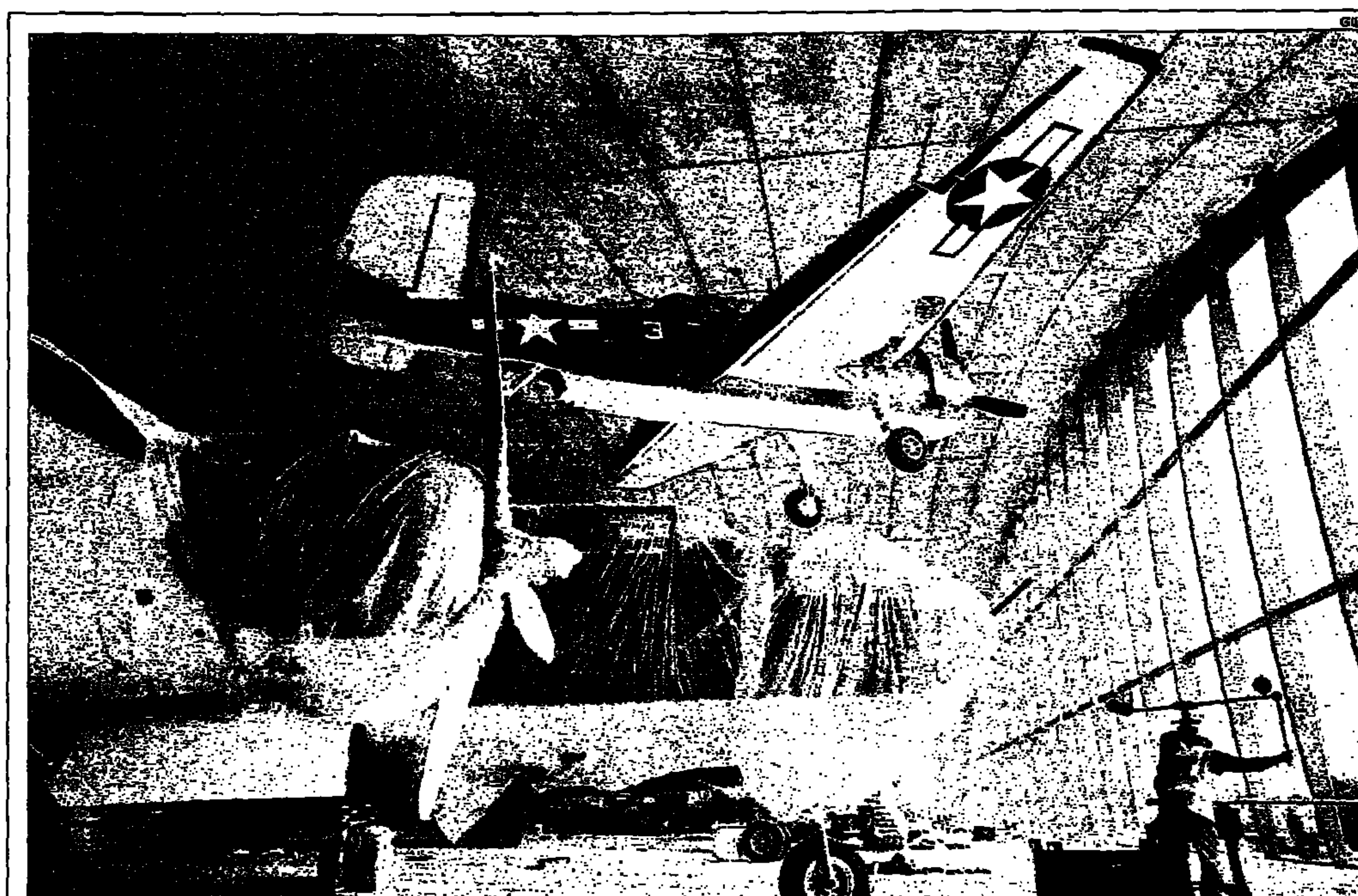
The Rev James H Simpson, to Trinity, Dundee.

Appointments

Nuffield Trust for the Forces of the Crown

Alderman Sir Brian Jenkins has been appointed a Trustee with effect from December 31.

GILL ALLEN



A view from inside the new hangar designed by Sir Norman Foster to house American war planes at Duxford air museum

£11m air museum is ready for takeoff

By John Shaw

CHRISTMAS greetings are still scrawled in the cockpit window dust of a B52 bomber and workmen's litter covers the floor, but work is about to finish on one of the most striking new museums in Europe.

The £11 million American air museum at Duxford near Cambridge, designed by Sir Norman Foster, will be completed next month and formally handed over to the Imperial War Museum. The interior will then be fitted out ready for an opening in June or July.

It will house 21 historic American military aircraft from a First World War biplane to supersonic jets used in the Gulf War. Some exhibits are suspended from the ceiling as if in flight like a black U2 spy plane which carried out missions over China in the early Sixties.

The building is a tribute not only to the rise of American global air power but is also intended as a memorial to the 30,000 US airmen who were killed flying from British bases, including Duxford, during the Second World War.

The scheme is a flagship project for the Heritage Lottery Fund. Frank Crosby, marketing manager at Duxford, said it was the first major museum construction project completed from start to finish with £6.5 million of lottery money. "The fund provided the bulk of the money with the rest coming from private sources. They ranged from Saudi Arabia which contributed $1 million (about £600,000) to mailshots among servicemen and companies in the United States. We still need $1 million."

Looking out over the exhibits, many shrouded in protective plastic sheeting, he said: "We are confident about raising the money. This is a major scheme which will be one of the finest museums in Europe."

The aircraft have been arranged under a huge pre-cast concrete span with massive windows at one end which can lift up to allow exhibits to be changed. Computer-aided design techniques were used to arrange the aircraft on the 77,000 sq ft space before they were moved in before Christmas.

Sir Norman has designed the building as a section of a torus, a geometric structure the public will recognise as being like part of an aircraft wing tip, sliced across at its thickest section.

Visitors will enter at mezzanine level looking straight into the B52 cockpit. The bomber flew on operations in the Vietnam War and has a 185ft wing span. It is both the biggest exhibit and the centre piece of the display.

Mr Crosby said: "We are not just going to say: 'Here's a B52,' we are going to explain both its role in American air power and how that fits into the history of the twentieth century."

The earliest exhibit: a biplane from the First World War

The aircraft went into service in 1954 and would still be on front line duty well into the next century, he said. "It's a very durable aircraft, nothing else has come close to that record."

The 4,500ft Duxford runway is the shortest ever used for a B52 landing and the massive plane is the only one of its type on public display outside the US.

Former President Bush has given permission for a Grumman Avenger torpedo bomber to be painted in the colours of the version he flew in the South Pacific during the Second World War. It hangs from the ceiling near the U2.

But the exhibits are not without their ironies. On the ground below is an SA2 missile of the type used by the Russians to shoot down the spy plane flown by Francis Gary Powers which caused an international incident when he was caught spying over the Afghan Soviet border in May 1960.

Jesuit papers may hold key to Inka language

By Norman Hammond, Archaeology Correspondent

A MANUSCRIPT which could be "a Rosetta Stone for Andean scholarship" has been found in an Italian archive. Titled a *History and Rudiments of the Language of the Peruvians*, the manuscript, if genuine, could provide a key to the lost language of the *quipus*, the knotted cords used by the Inka for communication through their empire.

The document claims that "there is a general quipu used by everyone for numbering and daily communication, and another quipu for keeping all religious and caste secrets, known only to the Kings, the Virgins of the Sun, the Priests, and the Philosophers". Although the Spanish conquistadors destroyed as many as they could, some survived, and Father Blas Valera, a half-Inka Jesuit, was said to be able to read them easily.

Purportedly written early in the 17th century by two Italian Jesuits, Joan Antonio Cumis and Joan Anello Oliva, together with three pages of drawings by Valera, the nine folios of text and their later binding are in the family papers of the Neapolitan historian Clara Miccinelli. She published a short book on them, *Quipu: The Talking Knots of the Mysterious Inka* in 1989, but it received little academic attention.

Now Professor Laura Laurencich Minelli of the University of Bologna, convinced of its authenticity, has brought the manuscript to public attention again, but some noted Inka experts believe it to be a fake.

Professor Gary Urton of Colgate University notes that most Peruivan documents are "boring and uninformative", while this one "wraps up the whole of Peruvian history in a dozen pages, a highly remarkable and therefore suspicious document in its completeness and its insistence on its own authenticity".

The document claims that literary quipus were written with woven symbols and knotted cords: each symbol was a word key, for a limited range of terms that could be changed using particles and suffixes. The number of knots below the symbol showed which syllable of the word was to be enunciated.

The name of the Inka deity Pachacamac would be divided Pa-cha-ca-mac: "pacha" also meant "time" in Quechua, and could be denoted by indicating with one and two knots the first two syllables in the key symbol for the god's name.

Cumis' part of the manuscript includes a brief list of word keys and their quipu equivalents. The drawings said to be by Blas Valera purport to show how the Inka poem *Sumac Nusta* — "*Beautiful Princess*" was written, and a quipu fragment accompanying the document is said to encode lines from the poem.

Equally controversial, however, are the historical claims the document makes. Oliva says that Francisco Pizarro, who conquered Peru by capturing the Inka emperor Atahuallpa, in fact carried out his coup by poisoning the Inka generals with wine laced with arsenic.

He also claims that Valera lived for nearly a quarter century beyond his supposed death in 1596, and that Valera's history of the conquest of the Inkas was published by the famous historian Guaman Poma de Ayala under his own name. Valera is said to have included a cryptic reference to his authorship in an illustration of the quipu in Poma's book: the quipu shown encodes the opening stanza of the *Sumac Nusta*.

Inka specialists are divided about the authenticity of the document: apart from Professor Urton's scepticism, Professor Juan Ossio of the Catholic University in Lima points out that Valera would have lacked the knowledge of southern Peru shown in the text. Professor John Rowe of the University of California at Berkeley, the doyen of Inka scholars, believes that the manuscript is "not a fake, though its historical content is rather spurious: both Valera and Oliva played with the truth to serve their political goals".

Nevertheless, if it does offer a key to the quipus, it would be "a tremendous advance", Professor Urton said; but until technical tests have been done "we simply have to withhold judgement. If we admit a document written in recent decades into the literature, we risk diverting ourselves from the serious study of Inka writing".

Source: *Archaeology* Vol.49 No.6: 50-56.

Latest wills

John George Knowles **Kennedy**, of London W11, left £4,080,288 net. He left £10,000 to the Cancer Research Campaign and £10,000 to Hirra Milne to be spent in any way that gives her pleasure, rather than saved, and with thanks for the care and love so recently enjoyed.

Blanche Theresa **Kerman**, of London W1, left £4,250,045.

John Ralph **Bankes**, of Fulham, London SW6, left £1,416,757 net. He left his residuary estate to the Royal Agricultural Society of England.

Ronald Leopold **Desmuth**, of Farnham, Surrey, left £1,484,658 net. He left £5,000 each to Dr Barnardo's, Phyllis Tuckwell Memorial Hospice, Old People's Welfare (Farnham), Cheltenham College Charitable Trust and Trinity Hall, Cambridge.

William Keith **Robinson**, of Harrogate, North Yorkshire, left £559,642 net. He left £10,000 to the Charles and Elsie Sykes Trust, North Park Road.

Dorothy Evelyn **Troughton**, of Poulton Le Fylde, Lancashire, left £530,318 net. She left shares in her estate to the Whitegate Drive Baptist Church, Blackpool, Baptist Missionary Society, British Epilepsy Society, Deaf Society, Save the Children Fund and Salvation Army.

Robert Walker **Cox**, retired chartered accountant, of Beeston, Nottingham, left £579,004 net.

Audrey Muriel **Gardner** of Sunninghill, Berkshire, left £732,732 net.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr G.P. Allman and Miss R.D.M. Austin

The engagement is announced between Guy, younger son of Mr and Mrs Ray Allman, of Far Poden, Honeybourne, Worcestershire, and Rebecca, daughter of Sir Anthony and Lady Austin, of Stanbury Manor, Morwenstow, Cornwall.

Mr R.B. Charlton and Miss G.V.L. Kelly

The engagement is announced between Ralph, son of Mr R.B. Charlton, of Linnel Wood, Northumberland, and Georgina Cruddas, of Stalybridge, Cheshire, and Georgina, daughter of Sir David and Lady Kelly, of Stanton Fence, Northumberland.

Mr M.J.S. Cook and Miss V.C. Drake

The engagement is announced between Michael, younger son of Mrs A.M. Cook, of Victoria, London, and the late Mr J.R. Cook, of Oxton, Wirral, and Vanessa, daughter of Lieutenant Colonel and Mrs R.M.W. Drake, of Brambridge, Hampshire.

Mr T.H.M. Crabtree and Miss A.L. Hammond

The engagement is announced between Tim, only son of Major General and Mrs Derek Crabtree, of Shrivenham, Oxfordshire, and Anne, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs John Hammond, of Durley Mill, Hampshire.

Mr E.F. Duncan and Miss J.S. McIntosh

The engagement is announced between Euan Duncan, LLB, only son of Mr and Mrs Walter Duncan, of Forres, Moray, and Juliet, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Alastair McIntosh, of Gullane, East Lothian.

Mr A.J. Elliott and Miss F.S.R. Wilson

The engagement is announced between Alan, younger son of Mr and Mrs Michael Elliott, of Sheffield, Yorkshire, and Florence, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Nicholas Wilson, of Kenilworth, Warwickshire.

Mr J.C. Francis-Jones and Miss A-R. Molloy

The engagement is announced between James, elder son of Captain and Mrs Jake Francis-Jones, of Woodlawn House, Zeals, Wiltshire, and Anna-Rose, daughter of Mr and Mrs Anthony Molloy, of Crossogue House, Thurles, Co Tipperary, Ireland.

Mr C. Holst-Roness and Miss L.B. Frost

The engagement is announced between Carl, younger son of Dr Rolv and Dr June Holst-Roness, of Harstad, Norway and Freetown, Sierra Leone, and Laura, daughter of Mr and Mrs R.S. Frost, of Badgworth, Somerset.

Mr G.W. Kenton and Miss E.M. Earle

The engagement is announced between Geoffrey, son of Mr and Mrs Richard Kenton, of West Bexington, Dorset, and Elizabeth, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Earle, of Ryme Intrinseca, Dorset.

Mr J.W.A. Livesey and Miss J.R. Millen

The engagement is announced between John, son of Judge R.J.D. Livesey, QC, and Mrs Livesey, and Joanna, daughter of Mr and Mrs W. Millen, both of Southport.

Mr D.N.J. Logue and Miss B.A. Stally

The engagement is announced between Declan, son of Mr and Mrs Seamus Logue, of Birmingham, and Boudicca, daughter of Mrs Ann Stally and the late Rev Arthur Stally, of Alcester, Warwickshire.

Mr S.J. Maslen and Miss J.L. Cope

The engagement is announced between Steven, elder son of Mr and Mrs J.G. Maslen, of Iver, South Buckinghamshire, and Janey, daughter of Group Captain and Mrs A.W. Cope, of Medmenham, Buckinghamshire.

Mr M.A. Mather-Lees and Miss P.A.J. Cook

The engagement is announced between Michael, son of Mrs M.D. Pescod, of Brecon, Powys and stepson of the late Mr R.F. Pescod, OBE, and Pandora, daughter of Dr and Mrs Michael Cook, of Exeter.

Mr J.E. Outhwaite and Miss P. Yee

The engagement is announced between James, son of Captain and Mrs Brian Outhwaite, of Westbourne, West Sussex, and Polly, daughter of Mr and Mrs King C. Yee, of Woodside, New York.

Major J.H.L. Patrick, MVO, and Miss L.A. O'Connell

The engagement is announced between Major James Patrick, Irish Guards, son of Lieutenant Commander and Mrs John Patrick, of Bourne End, Buckinghamshire, and Lucie, eldest daughter of Surgeon Captain and Mrs Morgan O'Connell, of Wickham, Hampshire.

Mr C.J. Pattison and Miss K.V. Dodds

The engagement is announced between Christopher, son of Mrs M.B. Nutter, of Richmond, North Yorkshire and the late Mr K.J. Pattison, and Katie, elder daughter of Squadron Leader and Mrs C.N. Dodds, of Grayshott, Surrey.

Mr S.A. Penney and Miss A.G. McLaughlin

The engagement is announced between Stuart, son of Mr and Mrs Anthony Penney, of Hastings, and Anna, daughter of Mr Richard McLaughlin, of Canonbury, London, and Mrs Penny Foster, of Tunbridge Wells.

Mr J.C. Price and Miss J.J.R. Yates

The engagement is announced between Joseph, son of Mr Edmund Price and Mrs Elizabeth Price, of Tyla Glas, Caerphilly, and Jane, daughter of Dr and Mrs Ivan Yates, of Juggs Corner, Kingston, Sussex.

Mr B. Smee and Miss K. MacIntyre

The engagement is announced between Ben, younger son of Mr and Mrs Michael Smee, of Musbury, Devon, and Kate, daughter of Mr and Mrs Mark MacIntyre, of Birdham, West Sussex.

Mr G.J. von Burg III and Miss S.E. Shelbourne

The engagement is announced between George Josef III, elder son of Mr and Mrs George Josef von Burg, of Bettlach, Switzerland and Hong Kong, and Sophia Elizabeth, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs M.Q. Shelbourne, of The Manor House, Soham, Ely, Cambridgeshire.

Mr S.J. Walker and Miss S.M. Benge

The engagement is announced between Simon, elder son of Mr Barry Walker, of Montalchino, Italy, and Mrs Hazel Walker, of Cholesbury Common, Buckinghamshire, and Sophie, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs John Benge, of Farnham Royal, Buckinghamshire.

Mr H.D. Walkinshaw and Miss J.A. Hawes

The engagement is announced between Hugo, son of Mr Colin Walkinshaw, of Compton, Surrey, and Mrs Pierre Rostand, of Beaulieu, Hampshire, and Julia, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Robert Hawes, of Chilson, Oxfordshire.

Marriages

Mr A.R. Collinson and Miss E. Rickards

The marriage took place yesterday at St Mary's, Borwick, Carnforth, Lancashire, of Mr Anthony R Collinson, elder son of Mr Jack Collinson, of Crosby, Isle of Man, and of Mrs Irene Collinson, of Burton Old Hall, Burton-in-Kendal, Cumbria, to Miss Edwina Rickards, younger daughter of Commander Arthur Rickards and the late the Hon Mrs Rickards, of Scotland. Canon F.B. Oddy officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Poppy Henrietta Collinson and Mrs Douglas Davies. Mr Thomas Andrew Hoyle was best man.

Mr A.M. Briggs and Miss A.H.C. Fowler

The marriage took place on Saturday, December 28, in St Paul's Cathedral, of Mr Antony Briggs, younger son of the late Mr Kenneth Briggs and of Mrs Briggs, of Sunderland, and Miss Alice Fowler, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Fowler, of London. The Rev John Lees officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Louise and Thomas Briggs. Mr Paul Burfoot and Mr Paul Briggs were best men.

A reception was held at Vic Naylor's, Clerkenwell, and the honeymoon will be spent in San Francisco and Hawaii.

Mr C.W. Brown and Miss E.C. Jacklin

The marriage took place on December 31, at St Patrick's Church, Southport, of Craig, son of Mr and Mrs William Brown, to Emma, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Jacklin.

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I shall appoint shepherds who will tend my sheep, so that never again will they know fear or dismay or punishment. Jeremiah 23 : 4

BIRTHS

BANKS - On December 28th 1996, to Simon and Rowena, a second son, Jack Samuel.

DOYLE - On 7th December 1996, to Nicola and Christopher, a son, Arthur Frederick.

EDWARDS - On December 21st, to Carol (née Hewson) and Gareth, a daughter, Imogen Alexandra Catherine, a sister for Christopher.

GREGORY - On 26th December 1996, to Jane (née McNeill) and Clive, a son, Bertram John William - Bertie, a brother for Phoebe.

GUMPEL - On December 21st 1996 at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, to Claire (née Somerville) and Jonathan, a daughter, Eleanor Maria Inge.

HILSON - On December 19th, to Anna (née Stevens) and Christopher, a son, Daniel Joseph.

ISHAM - On 22nd December 1996, to Richard and Julia (née Pilkington), a son, Charles Vere Ian. Special thanks to the Clapham Community Midwives and the Staff at St Thomas's Hospital.

BIRTHS

MARTIN CUSSONS - On Wednesday 20th November, to Sheila and Peter, a beautiful daughter, Kathryn Beatrice Elizabeth, a sister for Alexandra.

PATTULLO - On 23rd December 1996 at Queen Charlotte's Hospital, to Linsey (née Martin) and Kenneth, a son, Harry George.

PEGUM - On Christmas Morning, to Valerie (née Sourbern) and Roger, a daughter, Sophie Emily, a sister for Rachel and Adam.

WALKER - On 28th December 1996, to Simon and Frances (née Townsend), a beautiful daughter, Daisy Megan.

DEATHS

BIRD - Helen Irene, much loved daughter of Dicky and Irene, and sister of Rachael, Lorna and Alison; suddenly on 26th December aged 49. Funeral Service at St Mary's, Ilmington at 3 pm January 7th. Family flowers; donations if desired to British Heart Foundation. All enquiries to C. Locke tel: (01608) 685274.

DEATHS

HAWKES - Josephine (née Hubbard), widow of Ven. L.S. Hawkes, peacefully at home Sunday 29th December.

CHATWIN - Charles, aged 88 years, peacefully on 27th December 1996. Funeral Service at The Guild Chapel, Chapel Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, on Friday 3rd January at 1 pm, followed by private cremation. Donations if desired for either Friends of the Guild Chapel or the R.N.L.I. c/o A.E. Bennett & Sons, 34 Sheep Street, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 6EE.

JACKSON - Errol. Husband of Jeannette, Father of Amland and Nicky, Grandfather of Simon, Nertie and Timmy. Peacefully at Ellingham Mill, December 30th. Private Cremation.

KEAN - Suddenly at Forres on Monday December 30th 1996 Alexander Allan Kean, "Corrour" Forres. Husband of Mary, father of Alison, Alistair and James. Funeral Service at St John's Episcopal Church Forres on Saturday January 4th at 9.45am thereafter Cremation private at Inverness. Family flowers only.

LINDSEY-RENTON - Blanche Fox (née Auld). On 28th December 1996 at Gloucester House Nursing Home, Sevenoaks, Kent, Blanche Lindsey-Renton aged 105 years, widow of the late George Henry Lindsey-Renton of 'Dovers', Reigate, Surrey. Funeral Service to be held at Emmanuel Church, Sidlowbridge, near Reigate, Friday 10th January at 11.30am. No flowers, donations preferred to: The Royal London Hospital League of Nurses, Central Office, The Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel Road, London E1 1BB. Enquiries to Stoneman Funeral Service (01737) 763456.

McDOUGALL - Archibald Rutherford, known by all as "Dougall", Commander RNVR Retired. Died peacefully on 28th December aged 93 in the care of Huntercombe Hall Nursing Home. Husband of Phyllis, father of Roddy, grandfather of Zoe, stepfather of Penny. Funeral Service on Tuesday 7th January at Reading Crematorium at 1.45 pm. All enquiries to Tomalin & Son (01491) 573370.

McDOWELL - Rev'd Charles aged 80 years peacefully in hospital in Stratford upon Avon on 27th December 1996. Much loved husband of the late Elizabeth and son Michael, and grandfather of Colin and Catherine. Funeral Service at Stoneleigh Church, Warwickshire on Wednesday 8th January at 2pm. No flowers. Donations if desired for Ashow Church Fund may be sent to John Taylor Funeral Service, 178 Warwick Road, Kenilworth, Warwickshire.

MILLER - Leonard Frederick Charles of Ewell, Surrey, died peacefully at Headford Nursing Home, Ewell, Surrey, on Christmas Day. Beloved husband of Bertha and father to Michael, Ann, Paul and Christopher and dearly loved grandfather to their children. Funeral Service at St John the Baptist, Parish Church, Stoneleigh, Surrey at 1 pm on Wednesday 15th January, followed by cremation at Randalls Park Crematorium, Leatherhead, Surrey at 2 pm. Family flowers only. Donations if desired for Alzheimer's Disease may sent c/o Alfred & Ewart Longhurst, Funeral Directors, 21-23 Kingston Road, Ewell, Surrey KT17 2DX.

MONKS - Neale Cameron Stewart, of Berkhamsted. Suddenly, on December 27th aged 50 years. Beloved husband of Valerie, father of Parisa and Neale junior, brother of Judy Treharne and David Monks. Funeral Service on Wednesday January 8th at 10 am at St Peters Church, Berkhamsted, Herts. followed by private cremation. Donations in lieu of flowers please to SENSE, National Deaf-Blind and Rubella Association (founded by parents of deaf-blind children), 11-13 Clifton Terrace, Finsbury Park, London N4 3SR. Enquiries to J. Worley (Funeral Directors) Ltd, tel: (01442) 870326.

PIGGOTT - Arnold Howard (Pog) Commander R.N.R. retd. in his 93rd year peacefully on December 28th 1996. Beloved husband of the late Joyce and father of Jarvis. Funeral to be held in the Church of St Mary the Virgin, Hambleden on Saturday 11th January at 2.30 pm followed by private cremation. Family flowers only. Donations, if desired, to the Hambleden Parochial Church Council c/o Messrs Tomalin & Son, Anderson House, 38 Reading Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, RG9 1AG, tel: (01491) 573370.

PRATT - Peacefully on December 30th Dr. Maureen Pratt, aged 84 years. Funeral Service to be held at the City of Norwich (Earlham) Crematorium, Norwich on Monday January 6th at 1 pm. Flowers or donations in Maureen's memory may be sent c/o Peter Taylor Funeral Services, 85 Unthank Road, Norwich.

ROFFE-SILVESTER - Godfrey Peter of Crowcombe, Somerset, peacefully on 29th December, aged 72 years. Father of Charles and William, grandfather of Thomas and Henry. Funeral at The Church of the Holy Ghost, Crowcombe, Tuesday January 7th at 2.30 pm. Family flowers only, donations for St Margarets Hospice, B.P.S.S. and Williton Hospital to Grandfield & Son, Nether Stowey, Bridgwater, tel: (01278) 732219.

STOCKER - The Rt. Hon. Sir John Dexter MC TD peacefully on 27th December 1996 aged 78. Funeral Service at Putney Vale Crematorium, London SW15 on Friday 10th January 1997 at 2.30 pm. Flowers if desired to be sent to Ashton's Funeral Services, 140 Alexandra Road, Wimbledon SW19, by 1.30pm. Enquiries to Ashton's (0181) 946-1051.

USHER - Elizabeth, A.O. (née Molphy), after short illness, on December 23rd, aged 85 of The Residence, Clayfield, Brisbane, Queensland. Greatly esteemed and much loved by the Mottram, Wright and Dowd families of Liverpool, England. Funeral took place Friday December 27th at St Agatha's, Clayfield.

WEBB - On December 29th, peacefully in Patcham Nursing Home, Brighton, Valerie Maud Louise, in her 85th year. Dearest mother of Caroline, Annabelle, grandmother of Charles, Sarah-Anne and Andrew, step-grandmother of Fiona, Andrew and sister of Stephanie Penfold. Funeral Service Wednesday January 8th 1997 at Poynings Parish Church at 2 pm, followed by private cremation. Flowers or donations to British Heart Foundation c/o C & T Redmall F/S, Henfield, tel: (01273) 494877.

WOODS - On December 26th 1996, Major General C.W. (Bill) Woods CB MBE MC. Dearly loved and respected father and grandfather. Private family cremation. Memorial Service to be announced later. Donations if desired to Royal Engineers Benevolent Fund, Brompton Barracks, Chatham ME4 4UG.

WINTGENS - Suddenly in Winchester, aged 79 years, Nancy, dearly loved wife of Leonard, mother of Peter, Richard, Pauline and the late Rowena, grandmother of Charlotte, Guy, Toby, Hannah and Francesca. Private funeral at Randalls Park, Leatherhead. Memorial Service at St Mary's Church, Reigate on Friday, 17th January at 12 noon. If desired, donations to the Royal Marsden Hospital, Sutton.

WYLLIE - Ann Wilson, of Norham Gardens, Oxford, in her ninetieth year, on December 30th 1996, in her sleep, at Macclesfield General Hospital, after a short illness. A dearly loved mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. Private cremation. Service of thanksgiving for her life at 2pm on 25th January, in St Columba's Church, Alfred Street, Oxford. No flowers.

BIRTHDAYS

ABBOTT Norman, many happy returns on your 40th birthday 1st of January '97 with love from all the family.

THANKSGIVING SERVICES

SHARP - Stephen Hugh. The Thanksgiving Service will take place on Saturday, January 18th at All Hallows Church, Whitchurch, Hants at noon. No flowers, but donations, if desired, to the Macmillan Nurses or the All Hallows Tower Appeal.

WANTED

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هكذا من الأصل

SIR WILLIAM BROWN

Sir William Brown, CBE, chief executive of Scottish Television, 1966-90, and chairman of the Scottish Arts Council, 1992-96, died of a brain tumour on December 29 aged 67. He was born on June 24, 1929.

Bill Brown presided over the modernisation of Scottish Television, securing the future of a company which seemed bound for oblivion; and he chaired the Scottish Arts Council during a period of unusual difficulty. In both roles he showed deep integrity allied to exceptional gifts of analysis, vision and leadership.

He had an unassuming charm, combining old-fashioned courtesy and a genuine interest in others with a vigour that seemed ageless. He also had the tough-mindedness to understand and confront change and was able to say unpalatable things in a way which offended nobody but forced them, too, to be realistic.

William Brown was educated at Ayr Academy and Edinburgh University, where he qualified as an accountant, and spent his National Service in the Royal Artillery. His long association with Scottish Television began in 1957, a year after Roy Thomson's station went on the air, when he became its London sales manager.

About the best that could be said of STV at that time was that its local programmes were cheap and cheerful. This was a euphemism for shoddiness and inanity. Most of what came out of the studios in the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, such as the *One O'Clock Gang*, will be remembered only by those with a cultist penchant for dire television. Much of the rest was brought in, from England and America.

With an excess of candour Roy Thomson called the station a licence to print money. It was a remark that enraged the regulatory establishment. Nemesis came in 1969 when the Independent Television Authority demanded that Thomson reduce his shareholding to 25 per cent. The family decided to get out of STV altogether.

The result was an exceptionally difficult round of negotiations for Brown, who had been appointed managing director in 1966, especially since the sale of the Thomson shareholding coincided with the destruction by fire of the Theatre Royal and the STV studios.

But much good came of the change. The diffusion of the STV ownership gave Brown considerable freedom of action, and he moved to restore first the station's fabric and then its reputation. STV moved to new studios and offices at Cowcaddens and the old Theatre Royal became the headquarters of Scottish Opera. Brown, with Sir Alexander Gibson and others, worked enthusiastically for its restoration and became a director of the Scottish Opera Trust.

The poverty of STV's programmes, Brown saw, would not indefinitely be tolerated by the regulators. He began to stiffen the quality of its output — hiring as a producer, among others, the young Gordon Brown, now Shadow Chancellor — and in 1985 recruited Gus Macdonald from Granada as director of programmes. To better news and documentary programmes were added popular dramas such as *Taggart* and *Take the High Road* which gave STV unprecedented exposure on the network.

Jeremy Isaacs — later first chief of Channel Four, of which Brown was a founding director — was commissioned to produce a controversial film, *A Sense of Freedom*, about the notorious hard man turned sculptor, Jimmy Boyle. Brown showed coolness under fire when he resisted attacks on the film and Isaacs later paid tribute to the support Brown gave him during Channel Four's troubled early days.

The two men later had the distinction of being jointly "handbagged" at a seminar called by Mrs Thatcher to consider the Peacock report on the liberalisation of television. Brown was in the middle of a defence of ITV's record in general and the public-service ethos in particular when she

interrupted him and said that ITV was the "last bastion of restrictive practices". Turning a baleful eye on Isaacs, she added: "Apart from the Royal Opera House" (of which Isaacs was by now chief executive). Brown's habitual urbanity was not disturbed, but he seethed privately for a long time afterwards.

As franchise renewal approached, Brown fought stoutly through some bitter executive wars to ensure that Macdonald would succeed him as chief executive (and later as chairman). When he eventually stepped down in 1990 he was the longest-serving chief executive in the ITV federation. In 1991 the STV bid to renew its franchise was unopposed, although auctions were held elsewhere, and the station thus became the longest-serving ITV company still broadcasting in its original region.

Brown took up an important new challenge in 1992 when he became chairman of the Scottish Arts Council. During his term, responsibility for the council was devolved from the Arts Council of Great Britain to the Scottish Office. The flow of lottery funds also began.

But these issues were insignificant beside the crisis over Scotland's four major orchestras. There was a general problem of over-provision and a particular anomaly at Scottish Opera, where a standing professional orchestra was 50 per cent under-used. This led to a proposal to merge it with the BBC Scottish, bitterly opposed by the musicians of both bands.

The matter was not resolved during Brown's chairmanship but his patient diplomacy and analytical approach forced all parties to recognise that the status quo was not an option. This set the tone for the solution that has now emerged — a broad co-operative framework within which Scottish Opera and Scottish Ballet will share an orchestra.

At one meeting Brown recalled that the wife of Anthony Eden had said the Suez Canal seemed sometimes to flow through her living room: Brown remarked that the major orchestras of Scotland seemed to be playing in his.

Executive staff found Brown a shrewd but supportive leader. He was, Gus Macdonald noted, a perfect boss — equable, readily amused, tolerant of temperament and the artistic insistence on the right to fail. As chairman of the arts council, his staff knew that once he was satisfied that a policy was soundly based, he would give it steadfast support.

He hated, above all, to be caught unbriefed. For a man who had achieved much — civil servants at the Scottish Office regarded him as one of the most able laymen ever to chair a public body in Scotland — he was utterly free of pomposity, a quality he detested in others.

He was widely respected, also, in the television industry. He twice chaired — from 1968-70 and 1978-80 — the council that oversees the ITV federation, and fought for better access to the network of programmes made by the smaller companies. He was awarded the Royal Television Society's gold medal for outstanding services in 1984.

After his retirement as STV chief executive, he served as a non-executive chairman until this year.

He also chaired the Scottish Amicable Life Assurance Company from 1989 to 1994.

He was appointed CBE in 1971 and was knighted in the birthday honours of 1996. Because of the onset of illness, the Duke of Edinburgh awarded him the accolade and insignia in a private ceremony at the City Chambers, Glasgow.

He was an indefatigable supporter of the arts, and his other private passion was golf. He was a member of the Royal and Ancient, and latterly captain of Prestwick.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy, three daughters and a son.

PROFESSOR S. HERBERT FRANKEL

S. Herbert Frankel, Professor of the Economics of Underdeveloped Countries at Oxford University, 1946-71, died on December 11 aged 93. He was born on November 22, 1903.

HERBERT FRANKEL was an eminent economist, an educational pioneer and an adviser to governments, whose distinguished career spanned 70 years. He was born in Johannesburg, his parents having recently emigrated to South Africa from Germany. His father's success in the grain business was interrupted by the First World War, when he was forced to flee from South Africa to escape internment as an enemy alien.

As a teenager, Sally Herbert Frankel not only had responsiblity for helping his family during his father's five-year absence but also experienced the double prejudice of anti-Germanism and anti-Semitism. In combination with his formative memories of the illogicalities of the colour bar, this made him a lifelong opponent of all forms of racial and religious segregation.

He achieved success as one of the first graduates of the University of the Witwatersrand and then at the London School of Economics. His first book was published when he was 23; at 25 he returned as head of Witwatersrand's economics department: he was appointed professor when he was only 28.

His academic interests were a reflection of his close-knit family background. Unlike many economists, he felt that detailed empirical investigation of the working of real-life business was essential. *Co-operation & Competition in the Marketing of Maize in South Africa* (1925) and *The Railway Policy of South Africa* (1928) were early examples of his painstaking approach.

He was a convinced believer in the efficacy of the free market and an anti-Keynesian. His free market economics and his anti-racialism built on each other.

As he wrote in his autobiography, *An Economist's Testimony* (1992), he rejected the idea that Africans required paternal protection or that whites benefited from segregation. What was required by all "was fair economic opportunity and freedom of choice on fair and equal terms".

As a young professor, Frankel soon became a central figure in South African life. At his university he built a renowned department of economics. He co-edited the *South African Journal of Economics*. He was the organiser of an influential group, including Jan H. Hofmeyr, Oliver Schreiner and Edgar Brookes, who produced in 1930 a liberal manifesto for South Africa titled *Coming of Age*: later Frankel was a leading contributor to the liberal weekly *Forum*.

Because of his expertise in the economics of railways, mines and gold, he was in constant demand as a consultant and as a member of commissions in South Africa and elsewhere. Always close to Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, he was sent by him in 1930 to America to assess the impact of the Wall Streeet crash on South African goldmining.

But his role was sometimes as much political as economic. In 1936 he was invited by the Jewish Agency to give evidence in Jerusalem to the Palestine Royal Commission (the Peel Commission). In keeping with his economic philosophy he argued against the view that there existed in Palestine a limited capacity to absorb Jewish refugees from the Hitler regime. Free economic development would produce growth and a capacity to employ an increasing number of Arabs as well as Jews.

During the Second World War, Frankel acted as a close economic adviser to Hofmeyr, who had become the Minister of Finance in Jan Smuts's wartime Government. However, the anti-war and pro-German sentiments of much of the Boer population made it impolitic for Hofmeyr to give public prominence to Frankel's role and made it unlikely that he would be invited into the inner circles of government in South Africa after the war.

These political conditions persuaded Frankel in 1945 to accept the offer of a newly-created chair at Oxford in Colonial Economics. He held this position (whose title was twice altered to fit changing political realities) from 1946 until his retirement in 1971. He was a Fellow of the recently-founded Nuffield College during these years.

At Oxford he played a leading part in introducing development economics and in helping to train colonial civil servants. He was responsible for raising the lion's share of funds to create Queen Elizabeth House and continued to advise colonial admin-

istrations in several African countries.

Between 1953 and 1955, he was the most active member of the East Africa Royal Commission, which investigated the future of Kenya (then under the impact of the Mau Mau rebellion) and of neighbouring territories. However, he was out of sympathy with the "socialist collectivism" then dominating economic thinking in Britain and found his closest colleagues among his fellow members of the Mont Pelerin Society, formed in 1947 under the leadership of Friedrich Hayek.

For several years from 1967, he taught during the spring semesters at the University of Virginia, where he valued the company of free marketeers such as Warren Nutter and Gordon Tullock. Following several books on development economics, he published *Money: Two Philosophies* (1977).

Frankel was active in Jewish and Zionist affairs. In 1925 he attended the World Zionist Congress in Basle. In the 1930s he worked to secure Jewish emigration from Germany. During and after the Second World War, his close relationship with the Oppenheimers enabled him to play the key role in ensuring that the refugee diamond cutters who had fled to Palestine from Antwerp received a supply of uncut diamonds. By 1989, Israel's diamond industry employed 22,000 people with sales of $2.7 billion. For 14 years, 1949-63, he was president of the Oxford Jewish Congregation and for 18 years, 1971-89, he served as the first chairman of governors of the new Oxford Centre for Post-graduate Hebrew Studies, now one of the world's main centres of Jewish learning.

Frankel married in 1928 his cousin Ilsa Frankel, a strong supporter and academic colleague. She died in 1994. He is survived by a son and a daughter.

LEW AYRES

Lew Ayres, American actor, died on December 30 aged 88. He was born on December 28, 1908.

LEW AYRES was adept at playing decent, sensitive, thoughtful and likeable heroes. But he was a classic instance of an actor whose greatest, most enduring role occurred at the onset of his career, leading the rest to seem anti-climactic.

All Quiet on the Western Front (1930) was only his third film. His portrayal of the eager young German soldier who becomes sickened with the Kaiser's lust for military glory in Lewis Milestone's anti-war film of Erich Maria Remarque's seminal novel of trench life, had a lasting effect on the actor's outlook. His pacifist views would lead him into controversy when the United States entered the Second World War.

He was born Lewis Ayer in Minneapolis. At the University of Arizona he studied medicine, which aided him later when he played the first screen Dr Kildare in a successful series. He was also a skilful player of the piano, banjo and guitar. Forsaking a medical career he joined a dance band, and was spotted playing at the Coconut Grove in Los Angeles by Paul Bern, then a Pathe executive.

Bern gave him a small part in a silent film, *The Sophomore* (1929), directed by Leo McCarey. Moving to MGM, Bern recommended Ayres for the second male lead in Garbo's last silent film, Jacques Feyder's *The Kiss* (1929). It led to a contract with Universal and the leading role in *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which won the Best Film Oscar and was a critical and financial success.

Ayres had reached the peak of his career, and was considered a potential big star. But his boyish looks soon proved a handicap in films such as *Doorway to Hell* (1930), in which as a bigshot gangster he was completely outclassed by James Cagney, ostensibly his henchman.

Nor was he at ease in comedies. *Many a Slip* (1931) failed as much for its screenplay as for the forced playing of its leads, Ayres and Joan Bennett. There were momentary respites from the downward trajectory, including James Whale's *The Impatient Maiden* (1932) opposite Mae Clarke, and Henry King's *State Fair* (1933) as the love interest of Janet Gaynor.

By the mid-1930s he had been relegated to B-pictures,

Lew Ayres, Lionel Barrymore and Lynne Carver in *Young Doctor Kildare* (1938)

and made a succession of them at various studios, including Republic, located on Hollywood's "Poverty Row" where he directed a film himself, *Hearts in Bondage* (1936). He was then cast in a main production, George Cukor's *Holiday* (1938), as Katharine Hepburn's spoiled brother, and performed well enough to be noticed again.

MGM gave him the title role in *Young Doctor Kildare* (1938) as an idealistic physician at odds with the old school personified by the tetchy Dr Gillespie (Lionel Barrymore), and it was the first of a popular B-picture series. Eight were made with him before the public grew tired. Meanwhile, Ayres played second leads and supporting roles in other films, including *Ice Follies of 1939*, *Broadway Serenade* and *Remember?* (all 1939).

As a consequence of his religious beliefs Ayres had registered as a conscientious objector. After the United States entered the war he said: "War is the worst crime. I just couldn't bring myself to kill other men." However laudable his position, it was totally opposed to prevailing national sentiment. Louis B. Mayer, the mogul of MGM, told him that he was finished in pictures, and the leading trade newspaper *Variety* declared him "a disgrace".

Exhibitors declined his films and cinemas that still showed them were picketed. He was replaced in the faltering Kildare series and went to work in a logging camp. Later he volunteered for non-combatant service as a medic, eventually becoming a chaplain's aide. He saw action, but did not fight, in the south Pacific, and was awarded three Silver Stars for gallantry.

After considering entering the church, he returned from the war a maturer, better actor. His performances as the detective in Robert Siodmak's psychological thriller *The Dark Mirror* (1946) and as the lawyer in *The Unfaithful* (1947), a remake of *The Letter* directed by Vincent Sherman, were admirable. As the sympathetic doctor in *Johnny Belinda* (1948), directed by Jean Negulesco, he was nominated for an Academy Award. His co-star, Jane Wyman, playing a deaf mute, won as Best Actress.

This was not enough to restore his career and he gradually faded from films, announcing that he would devote most of his time to studying world religions. His screen appearances became sporadic, including *Advise and Consent* (1962), *Battlestar Galactica* (1979) and a number of television movies. A lengthy documentary, *Altars of the World* (1991) was the fruit of his two decades of travelling and inter-denominational religious study.

He was married three times: to the actresses Lola Lane (from 1931 to 1933) and Ginger Rogers (from 1934 to 1941), and, after more than 20 years as a bachelor, from 1964 to Diana Hall, a British air stewardess, who survives him with their son, his only child.

ON THIS DAY

January 1, 1931

What happened after the dancing was over in a Cambridgeshire village hall and the dancers, undergraduates and girls working in local shops and factories, stayed on, was a matter which perplexed Bottisham magistrates.

CONDUCT IN A DANCE HALL

CONVICTION IN FEN DITTON CASE

The Bottisham (Cambridgeshire) magistrates yesterday had before them Mrs. EILEEN ALLEN WOOLFE, 40, who was charged with permitting a dance hall adjacent to her house at Fen Ditton to be used as a disorderly house. The defendant was before the Bench in March, when evidence was given that Cambridge undergraduates, and girls working in shops and factories at Cambridge, used to remain in the dance hall after dancing had finished, when the alleged incidents took place. The place had been kept under observation from November 1929 to January 1930. The Magistrates then dismissed the case against Mrs. Woolfe, as well as summonses against her son, Peter Woolfe, 19, for aiding and abetting his mother. The CHAIRMAN (Mr. T. Musgrave Francis) said that the Bench had reluctantly come to the conclusion that the law did not admit of their finding the defendants guilty. They had to administer the criminal law and not the moral law. If they were to administer the moral law no condemnation could be sufficiently strong for the shameless and wanton proceedings which had been alleged to occur in that dance hall. The criminal law was extremely limited, and they had to decide whether the premises had been used for habitual prostitution, and although they had been used in a grossly reprehensible manner they were unable to say that the hall had been used for the purpose alleged. The police appealed against the decision of the Bench, and on December 1 the Divisional Court allowed the appeal, and sent the case back to the Magistrates with a direction to hear and determine it according to the law.

Mr. Grafton Pryor appeared for the prosecution. Mr. Eustace Fulton defended.

Mr. Fulton, before calling Mrs. Woolfe to give evidence, asked the Bench to consider the fact that, in spite of what had been said elsewhere, Mrs. Woolfe had not made a shilling apart from teas. Mrs. Woolfe might have been careless, but not criminal.

Mrs. Woolfe read a statement in which she said that she had taken River Cottage, Fen Ditton, at the instigation of a public association, and she acted as area secretary, which necessitated her keeping late hours. Later on she acquired a barn next door to her house, which was afterwards made into a studio for singing, and her son organised boxing tournaments for village lads. In 1929 two members of St. John's College asked permission to use the room for dance band practice. Afterwards, she agreed to run three dances, the band taking a percentage of profits. Sunday tea dances were started and well attended, but only small profits were made by her. There was never any suspicion of wrong behaviour. There was only one occasion on which she saw anything wrong and that was when a man had a girl on his knee. He never came again, as they were closing the place owing to losses.

Mr. Pryor drew the attention of the Bench to the presence in court of the Senior Proctor, Mr. F.J. Dykes, of Trinity College, who desired to refute the statement of Mrs. Woolfe to the effect that any undergraduate giving evidence on her behalf would be sent down. That was quite untrue, and no edict to that effect had been issued by the proctorial body.

The Bench retired, and on their return the CHAIRMAN said that they were of opinion that no evidence had been called by the defence to displace the facts of the case, and they had no hesitation in obeying the order of the Divisional Court. The full fine of £100 would be inflicted, as they looked upon it as a deliberate inveigling of young men and young women into immoral courses.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

BARONESS WHITE OF RHYMNEY sends warm thanks for many kind greetings and her best wishes to numerous friends, colleagues and relations. With advancing years, she finds it difficult to write individually, but feels sure they will all understand.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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PUBLIC NOTICES

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Charity: The Nuffield Trust for the Forces of the Crown
Scheme for regulating the Charity
Reference: RM/3646/SC
The Commissioners propose to make a Scheme for this charity. A copy of the draft Scheme can be seen at School House, High Street, Shrewton, Wiltshire SP3 4DB, or can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to Woodfield House, Tangier, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4BL, quoting the above reference. Comments or representations can be made within one month from today.

STEVEN CARL TAYLOR of Parkview Mansions, Green Lanes, London N4 would like it to be known that henceforth he is to be officially recognised as JACOB STEVEN KARL TAYLOR.

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES
TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE TELEPHONE
0171-782 7344
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Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 2.30pm two days prior to insertion.

What sells newspapers?

PAPER ROUND

Brian MacArthur

The main story on the front page of the *Daily Mail* yesterday was devoted to the knighthood bestowed on Paul McCartney. Alongside that was a human interest story about a British woman in peril abroad: a photograph of Deborah Parry, one of the two nurses charged with murder in Saudi Arabia.

My bet, however, is that it was neither of these stories which was really moving the *Daily Mail* off the newsagents's racks. That honour belonged to Jonathan Cainer, who is not a journalist but an astrologist. All this week the *Mail* is serialising the predictions for 1997 that Cainer gleans from his study of the stars and planets, and promoting the series across the top of the front page.

According to Paper Round's study of what sold national newspapers in 1996, it is only rarely that news stories achieve the extra sales boosts that all editors strive so hard to gain. What adds sales most often are promotions. That is why horoscopes are one of the most popular tactics used by newspaper marketeers, especially on the tabloids.

When the *Daily Mail* serialised Jonathan Cainer's horoscopes last year, it achieved its third highest sales boost of the year, an extra 120,000 copies, and the *Daily Express* added 77,000 with its "Horoscopes 96" series. *The Mail on Sunday* added 192,000, its highest surge of the year, when it published a "new year" set of horoscopes — a real achievement — from the late Patric Walker. So did the *Sunday Mirror* with Russell Grant. The fabled Mystic Meg also works wonders for the *News of the World*.

Sex, health and money always boost sales. *The Sunday Times* got its highest increase of 1996 with its annual survey of Britain's richest men and women, and *The Sun* its second highest when it launched its Syndicates Lottery card. Marks & Spencer vouchers did well for the *Daily Express* as did a two-for-one British Midland ticket offer, a two-for-one BA offer in *The Mail on Sunday* and *The Sun*'s £9.50 short-break holidays in Britain.

With its combination of travel and saving money, the Eurostar promotion in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* was certainly the best broadsheet promotion of the year, adding more than 150,000 to sales of both papers over four weeks and pushing both to all-time records.

Any promotion related to healthy living is also a winner. A slimming promotion with Vernon Coleman won *The People* its highest sale of the year and a May bikini diet in the *News of the World* added 132,000. For the *Daily Mail*, a January diet wallchart achieved the biggest boost of the year of 177,000 and *The Sunday Times*'s "Change Your Life' added 113,000.

Sex, soaps, sport, TV and the royals are the other surefire winners. Study the seven news stories that did best for *The Sun* and four are about Diana, Princess of Wales or the Duchess of York (aka Fergie); another was England's Euro '96 victory over Holland, as it was for the *Daily Mirror*. *The Sun* got its biggest boost of all from the Christmas TV listings, another big success for the *Mirror*.

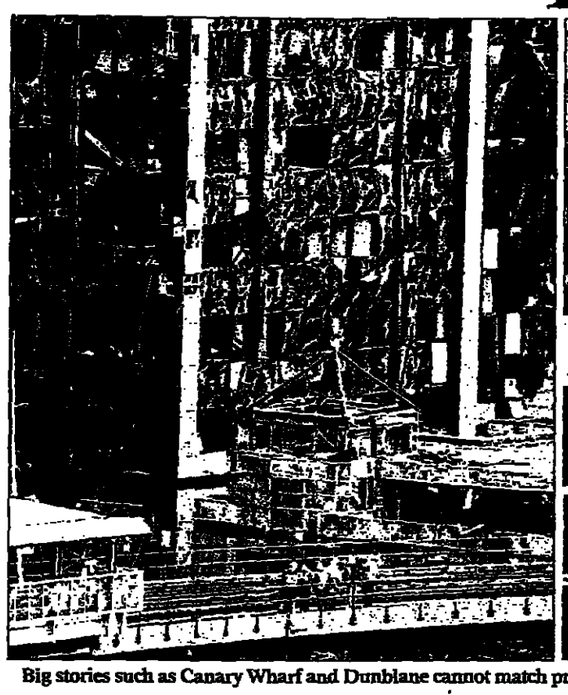
Study the *Daily Mirror*'s top ten and three are based on football, two on Gazza, two on Prince Charles or Princess Diana and two on Dunblane. A sex, drugs and rock 'n roll special took the *Independent on Sunday* to its highest sale of the year.

Yet royal stories work in all newspaper markets. A special on the Queen did well for *The Mail on Sunday*, adding 108,000, and the serialisation of Sarah Bradford's biography of the Queen added more than 200,000 for *The Times*, its highest boost of the year.

More modest promotions also work for the broadsheets. The most successful for *The Guardian* was a mini Halliwell film guide, which added 30,000, and serialisation of a Robert Maxwell biography, which put on about 20,000. For *The Independent*, its most successful tactic was its £3 video offer, which upped sales by 39,000, and it won an extra 30,000 readers a day from its publication of university vacancies.

Dunblane, two IRA bombs, Euro 96, the Budget, Princess Diana's divorce — news does sell newspapers, as *The Independent* found out when the IRA bomb went off near its Canary Wharf headquarters and its office was evacuated. The journalists who remained produced their best selling newspaper of the year as did those who did the Sunday paper.

Yet the best marketing tactic of all is the simplest. Apart from the *Daily Mail*, the newspapers that have reduced their prices have shown the best sales rises during 1996.



Big stories such as Canary Wharf and Dunblane cannot match promotions and horoscopes in the hunt for sales

GETTING SALES ABOVE

The stories and promotions that lifted sales

		Extra sales/	%
Daily Mirror	Christmas TV/John Major	283,000/	12
	Dunblane	174,000/	7
The Star	Play Dates	19,000/	3
Daily Mail	Diet Wallchart	177,000/	7
	Dunblane	128,000/	6
The Express	Horoscopes 1996	77,000/	6
	M&S vouchers	20,000/	2
The Times	Sarah Bradford/The Queen	205,000/	28
	Eurostar promotion	147,000/	19
The Guardian	Halliwell film guide	30,000/	7
	Robert Maxwell serial	20,000/	5
The Independent	Videos for £3	39,000/	14
	Canary Wharf bomb	30,000/	10
NoW	Christmas TV lists/101 Dalmatians	182,000/	4
	Football fixtures/Mandy Allwood	182,000/	4
The People	Slimming/Diana	125,000/	5
	Rose West/Scratchcard/Sex	75,000/	4
Sunday Mirror	Russell Grant horoscope	100,000/	4
	KamaSextra/Fergie	100,000/	4
Mail on Sunday	Patric Walker	192,000/	9
	The Queen	108,000/	5
Sunday Times	500 richest	149,000/	12
	Health: Change Your Life	113,000/	9
The Observer	Weird stuff	40,000/	9
	Half price/free Penguin	40,000/	9
IoS	Canary Wharf bomb	30,000/	10
	Sex, drugs, rock	30,000/	10

The Telegraph group declined to take part. See below for The Sun

THE SUN TOP TEN

	Extra sales	
1. Christmas TV listings	315,000	November
2. Syndicates Lottery Card	274,000	January
3. Super TV Guide	221,000	October
4. IRA bomb London	175,000	February
5. Football Football mag	160,000	August
6. Coronation St card	145,000	March
7. Dunblane	137,000	March
8. £9.50 holidays	126,000	January
9. Diana video hoax	124,000	October
10. England beat Holland	100,000	June

Source: News International

The 1997 wish list for all licence fee payers

All I want for the new year is . . .

WITH 30,000 students now enrolled in British degree courses in media studies, and with hundreds of digital satellite channels, plus the new Channel 5 on their way, it is hard to know what else to wish for in 1997. But I will try:

☐ An electronic guide to BBC management. Has Alan Yentob been relegated to Channel 163?

☐ Magazines that do not spew glossy leaflets for cut-price power tools, film prints, fitted kitchens and home insurance all over your carpet. I know, I *know*, these fillers keep the cover price down. I hate them.

☐ Radio 4's *Thought for the Day* to be moved to 6am to inspire the farmers.

☐ Politicians to realise that the *Today* programme on the aforesaid radio network is agenda-setting only for those stuck in chauffeur-driven cars between 7 o'clock and 8.45 on weekday mornings. Everybody else seriously interested in public affairs has his or her head stuck in newspapers at that time of day.

☐ An end to newspaper space for judges who tell psychopaths, "You are a monster whose actions are abhorrent to all right-thinking people", thereby suggesting that all right-thinking people have contemplated the rape of a nonagenarian in a graveyard but, upon reflection, rejected it.

☐ A quiz at the end of the BBC's *Horizon* and other well meaning science television programmes to see if even one fact has been transferred to the mind of the audience. Which way does the water run between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea? Right answers get £10 off their licence fee.

☐ Television licence fee-dodgers (who are — more good news from 1996 — no longer to be sent to jail) to be sentenced to 40 weeks of viewing only daytime television.

☐ A V-chip to blot out *Crimewatch*, the most frightening programme on TV.

☐ Jeremy Paxman to present *Question Time*.

☐ The new Chinese rulers of Hong Kong to announce on July 1 that they have embraced Western notions of a free press. Western journalists can thereupon renew their leases on their elegant high-rise flats, confident of continuing to work uncensored as before.

☐ A quiet agreement to shelve the Millennium Exhibition as a bad idea and to give the £700 million to schools instead. Or to hospitals. Or repairing the sewers. Or anything.

☐ A rest cure for Chris Evans.

☐ Maternity leave for Madonna.

☐ Television weather forecasters to face the map, rather than the audience, saving us those embarrassing mimes in which their left hand swoops over the Isles of Scilly when they are talking about the Scottish Highlands.

☐ An award for *Neighbours*, the sunny soap.

☐ A television set you can hang on the wall (as promised by futurologists for the past 20 years).

☐ A recognition that Ireland is a European partner like any other and therefore can tolerate British politicians referring to its Prime Minister in English. Otherwise, fair's fair. If we must endure *Taoiseach* for John Bruton, why not *Bundeskanzler* for Helmut Kohl and *Premier Ministre* for Alain Juppé?

☐ A recognition that Ireland is a country that knows how to treat a film industry.

BRENDA MADDOX

☐ The disappearance of all astrology columns from newspapers and magazines. In their place could go recommended ripostes for those who coyly sidle up to ask you, "What's your sign"? To this, the late Richard Burton, I'm told, used to snap back: "Do Not Disturb".

☐ All drama-documentaries to be true. Accuracy need not be boring; it just takes longer.

☐ The return of the place-name apostrophe, as in King's Cross and Gray's Inn Road. Check saints' names in the telephone directory if you don't think there's a problem.

☐ The return of the multi-coloured Channel 4 logo.

☐ The return of *The Larry Sanders Show*, the sassiest American import since *The Simpsons*, which together prove that, despite the new waves of grotesque hypochondria and political correctness, American irony is not dead.

☐ *The Simpsons* to run five nights a week.

☐ A lifetime appointment for Don Cruickshank, head of the cable, satellite and telephone watchdog, Oftel. If security of tenure gives judges courage and authority, why should it not do the same for an anti-monopoly regulator?

☐ Calvin Klein to undergo counselling to cure bizarre fantasies of what kind of poster sells jeans and perfume to people waiting at bus stops.

☐ ITV to move the ITN *News at Ten* to whatever time it likes, but to give up that commercial break which so blatantly divides the hard news from the soft.

☐ The Queen, in her next Christmas broadcast, to remind the nation that love means never having to say you're sorry.

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QUALITY TO APPRECIATE

Show girls who star in luxury locales

Rachel Kelly on the ladies who launch country houses for leading estate agents

What do girls in pearls do when they grow up? Many become "show gals", the secret hidden asset of every country estate agent. These are ladies who launch country houses. Well-connected, horsey, Jaeger-skirted and part of the county set, they are deployed by the likes of Knight Frank to show potential buyers around.

Savills, Strutt & Parker and Knight Frank all employ between 25 and 30 show gals around the country. Only three of what Knight Frank prefers to term its "showover staff" are men.

They are definitely not estate agents and are more at home in the tack room than the office. The 1993 Property Misdescriptions Act means that the actual selling process is carefully regulated and can be handled only by agents; it is for the show girls to step in when an agent cannot take a client around the house. Since the Act, the women are careful about making any dubious claims about the houses that the agent cannot prove and tricky questions are referred back to the office.

Most of this staff are in their forties and fifties, married with grown-up children. Their jobs are normally obtained through contacts in a world where the smart estate agents dine with those whose houses they may soon market. Most adore their work and love nothing more than nosing around other people's houses — possibly that of their naughty neighbour who has run off with the local squire. The knowledge of who is selling makes them hot property at local dinner parties.

Colin Hughes, of Knight Frank in Guildford, says: "Their enthusiasm is infectious to the buyers. Showover staff do their job for the love of it and can therefore devote more time to it. That is why owners love it and why buyers do, too."

Agents also love the strategy. As the housing market improves, time has become the key and viewing women are coming into their own, especially with big houses, which take time to show. Mr Hughes says: "The practice is most prevalent in houses priced mostly in excess of a quarter of a million pounds."

Tim Dancy of Strutt & Parker's Ipswich office says: "Showover staff are very agreeable people who humanise the process of house-hunting. They live in the area and talk in the local terms." Crucially, they report back to the agent on the suitability of house and purchaser.

> ‘Owners love it and so do the buyers’

For the past four years, Jeanne Goodfellow has shown houses for Strutt & Parker around the Suffolk coast. Most of her customers are wealthy people buying second properties. She lived locally as a child and always retained ties with the area through family and a holiday home in Thorpeness. She has shown houses since her retirement from her job as an interior design consultant.

"You have to like people," she says. "People are understandably quite emotional when buying houses, so the process can be difficult. As the wife of a former serviceman, I've moved house goodness knows how many times. So I know the sort of stresses that people face."

Mrs Goodfellow believes that a human face and a love for the property divorced from the imperative to sell help to ease friction. Nor does she deny that common social contacts and knowing the local context sometimes help to sell a property.

The going rate is £4 an hour, plus mileage. "One would have to work full-time to make much money," Mrs Goodfellow says, "and even then my work is highly seasonal."

Show girls are busiest in spring and autumn, traditionally the selling seasons.

The business has become more professional since the recession. Tommy de Malet Morgan of the Savills office in Surrey says: "Back in the 1980s, we got feedback that showover women were over the top and sometimes a real turn-off; they would leap out at you. Business societies ran estate agents on a very hard-sell basis. But these days, they not only have a good business acumen, they adore the houses."

Graham Waterton, a partner of Strutt & Parker in Salisbury, says: "A nice, charming viewing lady is much less intimidating than a 6ft 5in male estate agent like me."

A harder edge is, however, becoming de rigueur. Sheila McDaniel was originally employed by Savills as a viewing woman. But the inevitable need for professionalism means that she is now employed as area sales manager for Harleyford. She says: "The idea is to make buyers relax and enjoy their visit as if they were having a day out. But underneath, there has to be strong professionalism because nobody buys from a shopgirl who does not know her product."

> ‘Women can find out more details’

Some agents eschew the practice. Ian Homersham, the joint chairman of John D. Wood, says that his firm does not employ showover staff because he considers the relationship with the purchaser too important to delegate. "Agents should know about the house and know about the street and the locality," he explains. "You cannot expect some smart woman to have the in-depth knowledge of experienced agents."

Nor is it all fun. Mrs Goodfellow says she hates the job when people do not turn up. She has travelled up to 30 miles, only to find that the viewer failed to arrive. Others complain about cold houses, dirty shoes and people who fiddle with objects.

Buyers can get angry. Ms McDaniel says: "I was the meat in the sandwich. If a buyer lost out, I would bear the brunt of the anger."

Then there is the security. Only a few years ago, Suzy Lamplugh was sent by a London agent to show a property to a Mr Kipper. She has not been seen since. Knight Frank insists on maintaining contact via mobile telephones, especially because most showing occurs over weekends when the offices are shut. Bill Dixon, a partner of Cluttons Agents, says: "I personally would not send a single woman to any house. I think it is fraught with danger."

Their solution: recently retired "viewing men". The days of the show girl could be numbered.

Mr Dixon says: "Men can be as enthusiastic about homes, but it depends to whom they are selling. Women are able to find out more about people because they love to talk to prospective buyers. But some women may talk too much and could unwittingly frighten them away."

MARTIN BEDDALL

Fay Cox, at 51, a veteran show girl. The job offers flexibility although, she says, "every day is different: there is never a dull moment"

FAY'S WAY

Ten years of tramping big houses

FAY COX, 51, is a veteran show girl and the kind of woman who probably has some good jewellery in the bank. She has shown for the Knight Franks office in Guildford for ten years. Though she had done a little work for a local estate agent, she did not want to work as one, preferring to be on the road.

"Every day is different," she says. "There is never a dull moment." The work allows her the flexibility to spend time with her husband, an insurance broker, and her children. Both her boys are at university and her daughter hopes to follow.

Showing also allows her to continue with secretarial jobs for the Hospital for the Blessed Trinity in Guildford and another local charity. "When I have viewings during the day," she says, "I can do these jobs in the evening."

Mrs Cox is proud that she gets on with sellers and buyers alike, adding: "They treat me as their contact and their confidante."

She demonstrates the growing professionalism of viewing women by being aware that sellers judge the performance of the firm by reference to the competence of the showover staff.

Mrs Cox says: "An important aspect of the job satisfaction for me is the challenge of selling a house by establishing and prioritising the needs of the buyer."

Despite her other jobs, such is her affinity with this one that she drives a Golf GTi in Knight Frank colours with a KFR numberplate.

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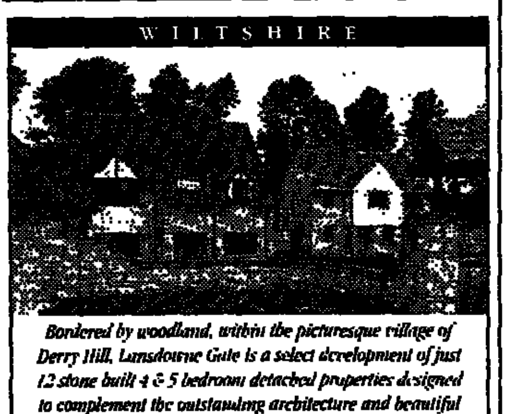

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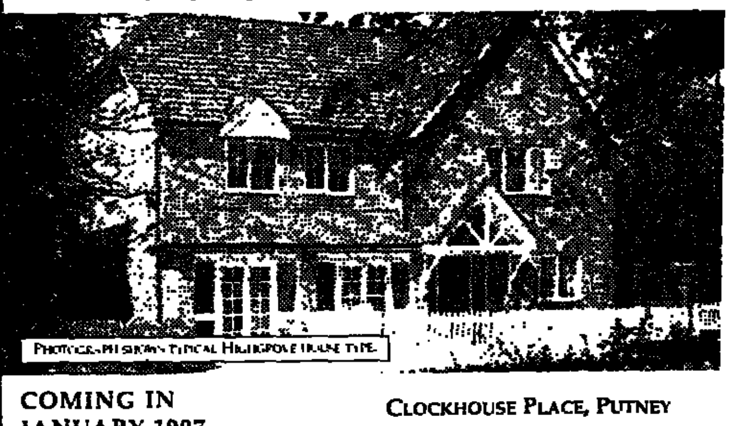

Photograph shows typical Highgrove house type.

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THE TIMES TODAY

NEWS

Cold shows no sign of relenting

■ Britain slithered into the new year today in the grip of a freeze which has left many roads impassable, claimed several lives and devastated sporting fixtures. Forecasters expect the cold snap to continue into the weekend.

Temperatures are not expected to rise above a maximum of 0C (32F) today. Most areas will be considerably colder with the wind-chill factor adding to the bleak outlook. A London Weather Centre spokeswoman said: "We are likely to see it very cold with some snow rather than huge falls" ....Page 1

Anger of Fred West film

■ Anger greeted the plans of a leading production company to make a film of the life of Frederick West. Peter Harris, the Official Solicitor, said that he has entered into an option contract with the Portman Entertainment Group .... Page 1

Philatelic theft

Harold Wilson, hounded by conspiracies, was betrayed by one of his staff "possibly from the gardener class" who stole illegal Rhodesian stamps. Government papers show ....Pages 1, 5

Deng 'seriously ill'

A Hong Kong newspaper with close ties to the People's Liberation Army reported that China's senior leader, Deng Xiaoping, was seriosuly ill.......... Pages 1, 9

Cheer for sceptics

The Bank of England governor has heartened Tory Euro-sceptics by emphasising the need for "rigorous" checks to ensure that European Union countries do not fudge the conditions for entering a single currency..............Page 2

Dirty election

Fresh evidence that this year's election campaign will be the dirtiest on record emerged as Labour pledged to puncture John Major's "nice guy" image..............Page

Nurses trial

Lawyers acting for the two British nurses accused of murdering a colleague in Saudi Arabia insisted that they would help them to receive a fair trial..............Page 3

Prince's plan

The Prince of Wales discloses a plan to breathe life into the nation's largest and most neglected listed buildings by turning them into low-cost housing....... Page 4

Nightingale in ward

The Radio 1 disc jockey Annie Nightingale returned to Britain after being mugged in Cuba on Christmas Eve. She was taken to hospital for a check.......... Page 4

Boy's damages

A boy who had to have lifesaving surgery after becoming infected with the "flesh-eating bug" has won £62,100 damages from a medical practice and the doctor who wrongly diagnosed his condition........................... Page 4

Palestine haggle

After agreeing on terms for its withdrawal from most of Hebron, Israel continued to haggle with the PLO over prisoner releases............................... Page 6

Saddam's fears

President Saddam Hussein of Iraq is now so afraid there are traitors within his family that he is relying increasingly on nonrelatives to be his closest political advisers .... Page 6

Iran election cash

The CIA was reported to have evidence that Iran secretly delivered at least half a million dollars in cash to the President of Bosnia before the election ....Page 8

Dutch headache

A king-size headache settled on the Dutch Government today. The six-month ailment is called the presidency of the European Union..............................Page 8

Frinton for the Continent

■ The long forgotten music hall artist Freddie Frinton has become a cult hero in Germany. Millions of television viewers do not believe their New Year's Eve celebrations are complete without switching on to see Frinton perform in *Dinner For One*, an obscure comedy routine filmed more than three decades ago in English and in black and white .... Page 3

ADAM BUTLER / PA

Henry Cano, a kitchen artist, with his ice sculpture made from 1,600 gallons of water, outside the Dorchester Hotel, London, yesterday

BUSINESS

Weather damage: The sustained cold snap in Europe pushed oil prices higher and prompted warnings from insurers that the nationwide freeze could soon lead to increases in both household and motor premiums .... Page 40

House prices: The market is set for a general and sustainable strengthening this year, says the British Bankers' Association .... Page 40

Jobs: Britain's engineering industry is likely to lose up to 400,000 jobs through technological and product change .... Page 40

Markets: The FT-SE 100 index rose 2.8 to 4118.5. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 95.6 to 96.1 after a rise from $1.6910 to $1.7120 to and from DM2.6325 to DM2.6373............................Page 36

SPORT

Cricket: Graham Thorpe, who has a better limited-overs record than England's other top batsmen, has been omitted from the side for the second one-day international against Zimbabwe..............Page 21

Football: After almost a decade John Barnes remains the organiser and guide of the leaders. Liverpool, as the race continues towards the destiny of the 1997 FA Carling Premiership .... Page 22

Weather: Freezing conditions have made deep inroads into today's sports programme, with more than 30 football matches postponed in England and Scotland....... Page 21

Rugby league: Joe Lydon has left Wigan after 11 years of significant input as player, assistant coach and manager .... Page 30

Impressive debut: Jessica Lange makes her West End debut in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and scores a triumph in the part of Blanche DuBois ....Page 12

Thumbs down: Michael McArdle's *Yule Better Change*, a musical version of Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*, struggles to satisfy its audience...............................Page 12

Seasonal steps: The Royal Ballet fields two contrasting casts in its Christmas production of Ashton's *Cinderella* ....Page 12

Spaced out: In our final part of the series *If These Walls Could Speak*, Nigel Hawkes visits Cape Canaveral in Florida ....Page 13

Guide: Family events, theatres and cinemas.................................Page 13

IN THE TIMES

■ FILMS
Geoff Brown reviews *Sleepers*, with its all-star male cast, including Robert De Niro, right, and Jason Patric

■ BOOKS
John Gribbin on parallel universes, Roger Boyes on the Vatican

Italian style: Linda Evangelista finds MaxMara worth getting out of bed for..............................Page 10

No messing: The trouble with being a messy person is that one feels so engulfed by impending chaos that even to begin to put a bit of order into one's life is frightening, says Nigella Lawson ..Page 11

Three's a crowd: Magnus Linklater has three identical scarves, all Christmas presents from his mother. Why, he wonders, does she misread his character?............ Page 11

Scoring sales: Newspapers are in fierce competition to be first with the news. The best way to increase sales, particularly for a tabloid, is a good promotion feature..... Page 18

In her dreams: An electronic guide to BBC management; a magazine that does not spew out glossy leaflets — two of Brenda Maddox's wishes for 1997................Page 18

Show girls: Why some estate agents think their refined style may be just a little out of date... Page 19

Resolving the problem of Hebron is an indispensable precondition for the continuation of the Middle East peace process. Any further delay will only benefit the terrorists on both sides — *ABC, Madrid*

Preview: George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, adapted by Hugh Stoddart, starring Emily Watson (BBC1, 9.00pm) **Review:** Matthew Bond finds the satire, *Cuts*, derivative and overlong............... Page 39

Beneath the ice

It is in Western Europe, where in 1990 forecasters spoke of the "European decade" to come, that winter gnaws deep into society's bones and electorates readily take the frozen ground as a metaphor for economic stagnation and the impotence or incompetence of politicians .... Page 15

Lieder writer

Two hundred years on, Schubert's heavenly melodies live more securely in the hearts of music-lovers than he would ever have dared to hope .... Page 15

Auld Freddie Frinton

In our electronic age, the traditions of the future are being created on our screens and tapes........ Page 15

MICHAEL GOVE

Although each taking of human life is unique and horrible there is something uniquely horrible about the scale, manner and mentality of the Wests' crime. Only organisations or individuals who had forgotten how to feel could think otherwise .... Page 14

SIMON JENKINS

We cannot handle good news. I believe this inability is becoming as morally debilitating as the readiness to absorb bad news. It makes us think worse of our fellow citizens and of foreign countries .... Page 14

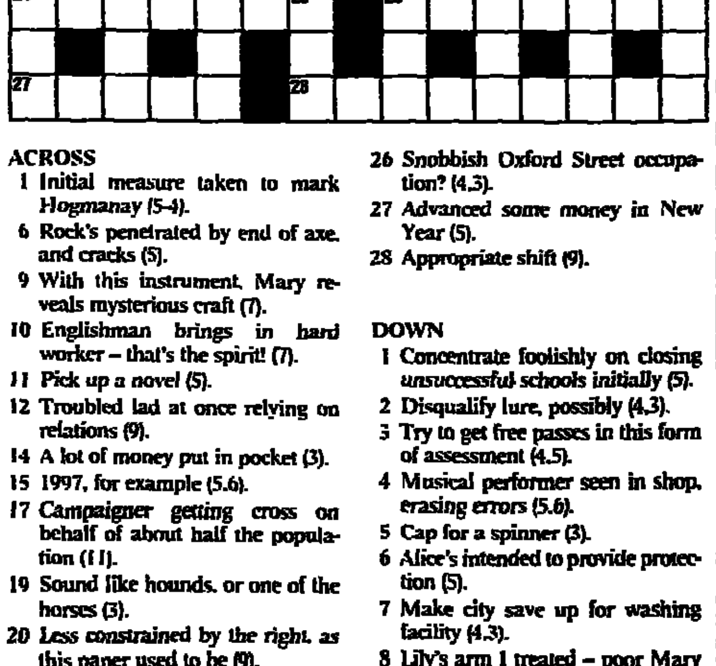
SIMON BARNES

In family life, generation succeeds generation in units of about 30 years. But, in sport, entire dynasties grow, reign, subside into decadence, crash and plummet, and the entire cycle takes no more than a few years .... Page 29

Sir William Brown, chairman of Scottish Television, 1966-90; Lew Ayres, actor; Professor S. Herbert Frankel, economist............ Page 17

A 1997 prayer for Africa; adoption policy; 1996 royal engagements; royal succession; Gulf War illness; PoWs in Italy.................... Page 15

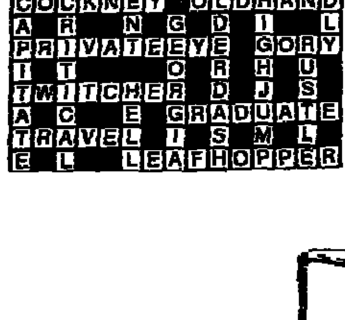
THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,365



ACROSS
1 Initial measure taken to mark Hogmanay (5-4).
6 Rock's penetrated by end of axe, and cracks (5).
9 With this instrument, Mary reveals mysterious craft (7).
10 Englishman brings in hard worker – that's the spirit! (7).
11 Pick up a novel (5).
12 Troubled lad at once relying on relations (9).
14 A lot of money put in pocket (3).
15 1997, for example (5,6).
17 Campaigner getting cross on behalf of about half the population (11).
19 Sound like hounds, or one of the horses (3).
20 Less constrained by the right, as this paper used to be (9).
22 Half-heartedly rush for dance (5).
24 Love that's intangible? (7).
26 Snobbish Oxford Street occupation? (4,3).
27 Advanced some money in New Year (5).
28 Appropriate shift (9).

DOWN
1 Concentrate foolishly on closing unsuccessful schools initially (5).
2 Disqualify lure, possibly (4,3).
3 Try to get free passes in this form of assessment (4,5).
4 Musical performer seen in shop, erasing errors (5,6).
5 Cap for a spinner (3).
6 Alice's intended to provide protection (5).
7 Make city save up for washing facility (4,3).
8 Lily's arm I treated – poor Mary is ill, likewise (9).
13 Voters seeing what prince's position might have been (11).
14 In which we make seesaw, so to speak (4,5).
16 Not having a ring, but ready to receive one (9).
18 Excitement produced by a gamble (7).
19 Socialist nonsense – about Liberal, namely (7).
21 Char paper (5).
23 What, perhaps, to do with poodle (French miniature) (5).
25 Tell Arab to get a move on? Golly! (3).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,364



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AA INFORMATION

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HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Southport, Merseyside 4C (39F); lowest day max: High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, -3C (27F); highest rainfall: Jersey 0.38in; highest sunshine: Tiree, Inner Hebrides, 6.1hrs.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 34.5% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 1995

WEATHER

☐ **General:** England and Wales will have another cold day. Eastern areas will be rather cloudy with snow showers at times. These will be most frequent over northeast England, parts of East Anglia and near Channel coasts. The West should be mainly dry with sunny periods and just the odd snow shower.

Scotland and Northern Ireland will be mainly dry at first, apart from snow showers in southeast Scotland. During the day, cloud and wintry showers will extend south across northern Scotland. It will be cold in most places.

☐ **London, E Anglia, E Midlands, Channel Isles, and SE, E, SW, NE, Central S and Central N England:** bright or sunny intervals, a few snow showers. Wind northeast, fresh to strong, moderating later. Max 0C (32F).

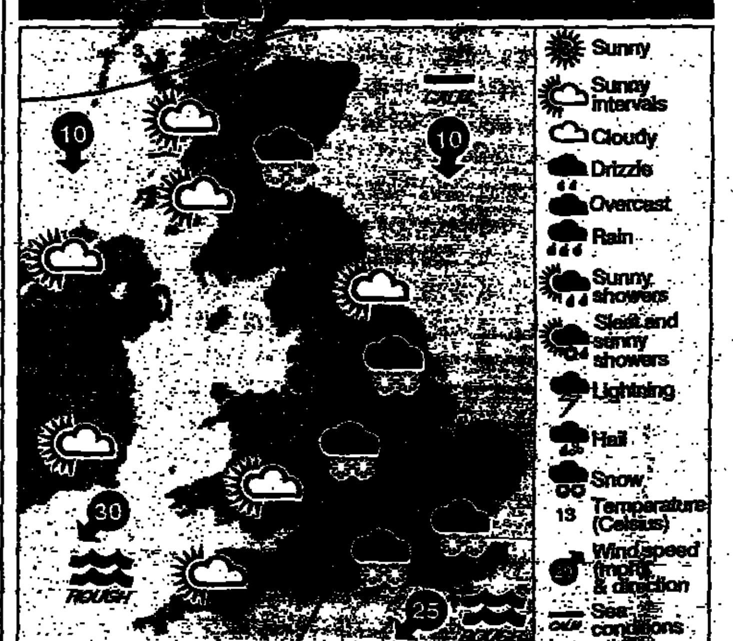
☐ **W Midlands, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man:** mainly dry, sunny periods. Perhaps a few light snow flurries at times. Wind northeast, moderate to fresh. Max 1C (34F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee:** a few snow showers at first, becoming mainly dry later. Wind northeast, turning north, moderate. Max 2C (36F).

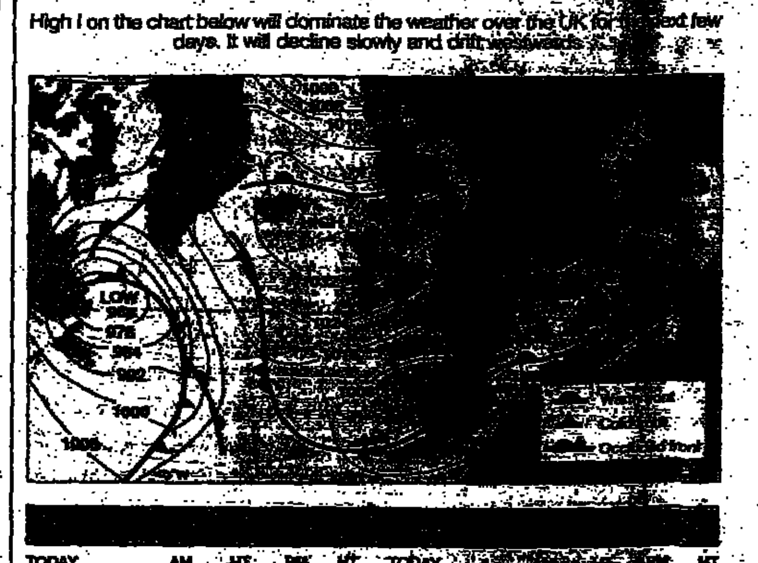
☐ **Aberdeen, Central Highlands, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Argyll, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** mainly dry at first, but becoming increasingly cloudy from the north, with more frequent wintry showers. Wind northeast, turning north, light to moderate. Max 4C (39F).

☐ **SW Scotland, Glasgow, N Ireland:** mainly dry with bright or sunny spells. Wind northeast, light to moderate. Max 2C (36F).

☐ **Outlook for tomorrow and Friday:** rain and snow in North, moving South and dying out. Staying cold.



High I on the chart below will dominate the weather over the UK for the next few days. It will decline slowly and drift westwards.



AROUND BRITAIN

24 hrs to 5 pm. b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	0.5	0.02	2	36	sn
Anglesey	2.0	0.02	3	37	h
Aspatria	4.4	0.01	1	34	sn
Aviemore	1.3	0.01	0	32	sn
Belfast	5.1	0.01	3	37	s
Birmingham	0.5	0.04	-2	28	sn
Bognor R	5.9	-	-1	30	s
Bournem'th	4.0	-	0	32	s
Bristol	5.9	0.01	0	32	s
Buxton	-	0.21	-2	28	sn
Cardiff	4.7	0.01	0	32	s
Clacton	2.8	-	-2	28	c
Colwyn Bay	0.5	0.01	2	36	sn
Cromer	3.1	0.04	0	32	b
Edinburgh	1.5	0.06	3	37	sn
Eskdalemuir	0.9	0.29	-1	30	sn
Exmouth	4.7	-	0	32	s
Falmouth	4.7	-	1	34	s
Fishguard	4.1	0.01	1	34	sn
Folkestone	1.3	0.24	-2	28	c
Glasgow	3.0	0.01	2	36	sn
Guernsey	1.8	0.02	2	36	sn
Hastings	0.1	0.27	-2	28	b
Hayling I.	5.7	0.01	-1	30	sn
Herne Bay	X				
Hove	X				
Hunstanton	-	0.07	0	32	sn
Ilfracombe	X				
Isle of Man	0.8	0.01	3	37	sn
Jersey	0.7	0.38	0	32	sn
Kinloss	X				
Leeds	1.0	X	1	34	sn
Lerwick	4.9	-	3	37	s
Leuchars	X				
Littlehmptn	3.7	0.01	-1	30	sn
London	4.9	0.01	0	32	sn
Lowestoft	3.2	0.08	-2	28	b
Manchester	0.8	0.04	1	34	sn
Margate	3.7	0.01	-2	28	b
Minehead	2.7	0.01	0	32	b
Morecambe	4.2	0.01	2	36	sn
Newcastle	0.8	0.07	2	36	sn
Norwich	4.6	0.01	-1	30	s
Oxford	5.8	0.01	-1	30	s
Penzance	X	-	2	36	s
Poole	5.8	0.01	0	32	s
Prestatyn	X	0.01	1	34	sn
Ross-o-wye	1.9	0.01	-1	30	sn
Ryde	X				
Salcombe	X				
Sandown	3.6	-	0	32	s
Saunton Snd	5.3	-	1	34	s
Scarboro'	0.3	-	3	37	sn
Shanklin	X				
Shrewsbury	1.0	0.01	0	32	sn
Skegness	3.0	-	1	34	sn
Southport	3.5	0.01	4	39	sn
Southsea	4.8	-	0	32	s
Stornoway	2.4	-	3	37	b
Swanage	4.8	-	0	32	s
Teignmouth	3.1	-	1	34	s
Tenby	5.1	-	1	34	s
Tiree	6.1	-	3	37	s
Torquay	2.3	0.01	1	34	b
Tynemouth	-	0.08	3	37	sn
Ventnor	4.1	-	-1	30	s
Weston-s-mare	4.8	-	0	32	s
Weymouth	4.9	-	0	32	s

ABROAD

	C	F	
Ajaccio	9	48	s
Akrotiri	18	64	s
Alex'dria	20	68	s
Algiers	17	63	c
Amst'dm	0	32	sn
Athens	16	61	f
B Aires	33	91	f
Bahrain	23	73	c
Bangkok	31	88	s
Barbados	28	82	f
Barcelona	8	46	f
Beirut	19	64	f
Belgrade	-9	16	s
Berlin	-11	12	s
Bermuda	21	70	f
Biarritz	1	34	f
Borde'x	-1	30	c
Brussels	-1	30	sn
Budapest	-8	18	sn
Cairo	19	66	s
Cape Tn	22	72	s
Cardiff	4	39	c
Ch'church	17	63	-
Chicago	-1	30	s
Cologne	-3	27	c
Corfu	15	59	r
C'phagn	-2	28	sn
Dublin	5	41	c
Dubrovnik	X		
Faro	14	57	f
Florence	1	34	s
Frankfurt	-7	19	sn
Funchal	17	63	f
Genova	-4	25	sn
Gibraltar	12	54	r
Helsinki	-8	18	sn
Hong K	18	64	s
Innsbrck	-10	14	f
Istanbul	11	52	f
Jeddah	27	81	s
Jo'burg	22	72	f
Karachi	X		
L Angels	15	51	f
L Palmas	17	63	c
Le Touqt	2	36	f
Lisbon	13	55	s
Locarno	-3	27	f
Luxembg	-6	21	sn
Luxor	22	72	s
Madrid	4	39	c
Majorca	9	48	r
Malaga	15	59	f
Malta	17	63	s
Melb'rne	16	61	c
Mexico C	17	63	s
Miami	27	81	s
Milan	-2	28	f
Montreal	-13	9	fg
Moscow	-18	0	c
Munich	-9	16	sn
N Delhi	20	68	s
N York	7	45	s
Nairobi	25	77	f
Naples	X		
Nice	5	41	f
Oslo	-4	25	s
Paris	-1	30	sn
Peking	3	37	s
Perth	28	82	s
Prague	-15	5	s
Reykjavik	5	41	c
Rhodes	15	59	f
Rio de J	27	81	f
Riyadh	23	73	s
Rome	3	37	s
S Frisco	16	61	f
S Paulo	27	81	c
Salzburg	-10	14	s
Santiago	28	82	s
Seoul	7	45	s
Sing'por	30	86	f
St'kholm	-6	21	sn
Strasb'rg	-7	19	sn
Sydney	18	64	s
Tangier	14	57	s
Tel Aviv	X		
Tenerife	21	70	s
Tokyo	15	59	s
Toronto	-7	19	sn
Tunis	16	61	f
Valencia	9	48	c
Vanc'ver	2	36	f
Vienna	-11	12	s
Warsaw	-14	7	f
Wellngton	21	70	-
Zurich	-7	19	sn

Temperatures at midday Monday, local time X = not available

TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	5.58	6.2	6.31	6.3
Aberdeen	5.57	3.6	6.04	3.7
Avonmouth	11.15	10.8	11.39	10.2
Belfast	3.24	3.0	3.45	3.2
Cardiff	11.01	10.1	11.25	9.6
Devonport	9.44	4.8	10.18	4.5
Dover	3.08	5.9	3.27	6.5
Dublin (N Wall)	4.15	3.4	2.39	3.5
Falmouth	9.15	4.6	9.49	4.3
Greenock	4.57	2.9	4.51	3.3
Harwich	3.45	3.5	4.18	2.4
Holyhead	2.39	4.7	2.54	4.8
Hull (Albert D)	10.44	7.4	10.54	7.5
Ilfracombe	10.10	7.8	10.39	7.2
King's Lynn	10.47	5.2	10.52	5.4
Leith	[illegible]	4.7	[illegible]	4.7
Liverpool	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	7.9
Lowestoft	[illegible]	2.4	2.28	2.1
Margate	[illegible]	4.2	2.40	4.1
Milford Haven	10.30	[illegible]	[illegible]	5.4
Newquay	9.22	5.8	9.55	5.5
Oban	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.1
Penzance	[illegible]	4.7	9.23	4.5
Portland	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.4
Portsmouth	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.42	4.0
Shoreham	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.37	5.0
Southampton	[illegible]	[illegible]	3.12	3.8
Swansea	[illegible]	7.7	11.09	7.4
Tees	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	4.5
Walton-on-Nze	[illegible]	3.6	2.17	3.5

All times GMT. Heights in metres

Sun rises 8.06 am Sun sets 4.02 pm
Moon sets 11.29 am Moon rises [illegible]
Last quarter tomorrow

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WEDNESDAY JANUARY 1 1997

Surrey batsman sacrificed as Atherton pursues all-round option

England drop Thorpe from one-day side

FROM SIMON WILDE IN HARARE

IF Michael Atherton had considered dropping himself from the England side today, he was not letting on yesterday. The captain dead-batted the suggestion that he might have been the batsman left out for the second one-day international against Zimbabwe at Harare Sports Club, which England must not lose if they are to avoid being beaten in the three-match series.

Instead, Graham Thorpe, whose record in limited-overs cricket is better than those of Atherton, Stewart, Hussain and Crawley, will be omitted so that England can play two all-rounders, Irani and White, and give themselves the security of six bowlers among whom to divide 50 overs. Caddick and Tufnell are also being left on the sidelines.

The idea of a team that is trailing 1-0 dropping its best batsman, albeit one who has struggled recently, is certainly a novel one and will doubtless encourage the Zimbabweans to believe that England have not followed their advice and abandoned their "superiority complex".

It may also harden the resolve of Zimbabwe to go on and win a series of limited-overs internationals for the first time. Until now, Zimbabwe's best result is a 1-1 draw with Pakistan — the other match was tied — at home two years ago.

Though England will say that the team named for today is the one that gives them the best chance of levelling the series, it is hard to believe that, if Atherton were not captain, he would still be in the side.

Ideologically, he has little sympathy for the limited-overs format (only on Monday he referred to the Zimbabwe leg of England's winter tour as being over, even though two one-day games remained to be played), is less adept than the likes of Thorpe at working the ball around in tight situations, and is in no sort of form.

Since playing the decisive innings against South Africa in Bloemfontein a year ago, Atherton has passed 30 only twice in 17 one-day matches for England (only six of which they won) and, since arriving in Zimbabwe five weeks ago, he has accumulated only 153 runs in 11 innings.

In the first one-day international, in Bulawayo two weeks ago, Atherton used up 77 balls scoring 23 runs and, finding it impossible to get out of first gear, was dismisseed attempting to hit Grant Flower, the part-time spinner, over the top. Although several of his team-mates were no less culpable, Atherton's performance

[redacted]

ENGLAND: M A Atherton (captain), N V Knight, A J Stewart, N Hussain, J P Crawley, C White, R C Irani, R D B Croft, D Gough, C E W Silverwood, A D Mullally.
ZIMBABWE (from): G W Flower, M H Dekker, A D R Campbell (captain), D L Houghton, A Flower, A C Waller, G J Whittall, P A Strang, H H Streak, E A Brandes, H R Olonga, S V Carlisle, B C Strang.

contributed to England losing a low-scoring game by two wickets.

In the past, one-day internationals at Harare Sports Club have generally been high scoring affairs, but runs have come at a laborious rate during England's games there on this tour.

The pitch today is not the same one as was used for the second Test match and the groundstaff yesterday took a lot of the grass off the outfield that curtailed the value of many strokes in that game, but England are still not expecting the game to be a run feast.

Irani will be playing his first match since his back trouble flared up after the first one-day international. Having been given an injection in his lumbar region to ease the pain, he has worked hard in the nets with David Lloyd, John Emburey and Ian Botham, not only to acquire the stamina to bowl long spells but also to modify his action to put less strain on his back and make the ball carry through.

Irani has never been a great swinger of the ball; his potential strength is to hit the pitch hard and move the ball away from the bat. The real test of his progress will come today and in the third match in the series on the same ground on Friday.

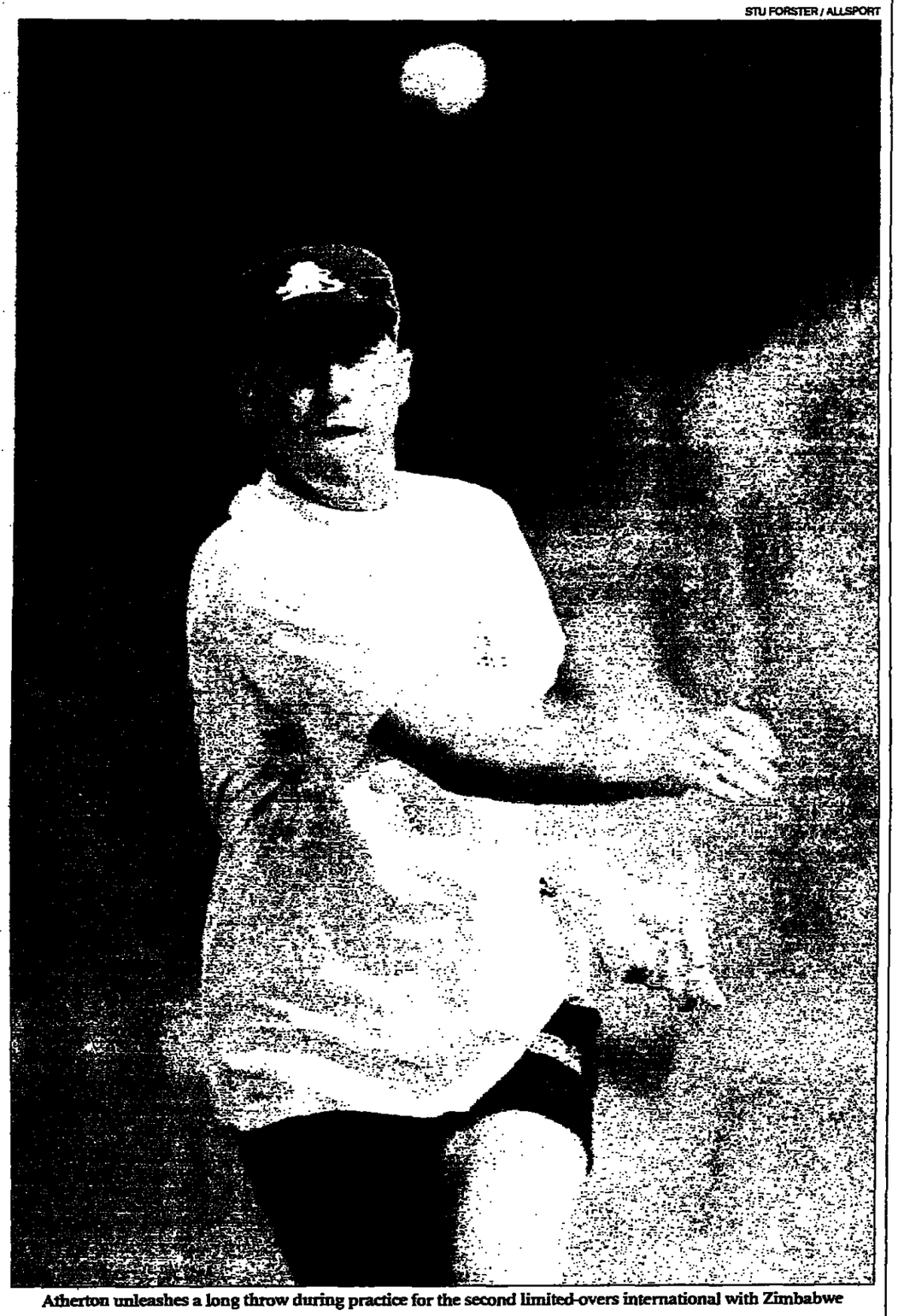
If he can satisfy the England management that he still has a role to play, he could yet remain with the team until the end of the New Zealand leg of the tour, something that looked unlikely two weeks ago.

However, with White having been told that he will remain with the party for the duration, and Cork joining the side next week, England could find themselves with more players than they are able to keep occupied.

That situation already applies to Jack Russell, who has played only two days of cricket since coming here, the most recent of them three weeks ago, and with Stewart in such fine form there is little prospect of him making anything but the occasional appearance between now and the end of the tour, on March 4.

Harare enjoyed its best weather for a week yesterday, raising hopes that the match today may not be spoilt. If it is interrupted by rain, a new system of calculating revised targets will be used. It is a modification of the one used for the World Cup, but is no less complicated. Anyone rash enough to try to understand it while nursing a new year hangover will soon be reaching out again for the aspirin.

STU FORSTER / ALLSPORT



Atherton unleashes a long throw during practice for the second limited-overs international with Zimbabwe

Winter break back on football agenda

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON

WITH the freezing weather playing havoc with the New Year's Day football programme — 36 matches have been lost in the FA Carling Premiership, Nationwide League, Vauxhall Conference and Bell's Scottish League — calls for a mid-winter break are rife again.

John Barnwell, the chief executive of the League Managers' Association, said yesterday: "The general feeling is that there should be some kind of break. The main problems are finding a time to suit everyone and how we would plan our season.

"We would have to make sure the clubs would abide by a break and not go overseas to try to make some money. That happened when I was managing in Greece. We nipped off to play in a four-team tournament!"

Barnwell is not convinced that many clubs could afford to stay idle for

Fixtures 30
Racing 31

long. "Many are now plcs and, when you're a corporate business, you're affected by market forces,' ' he said. "The Christmas period is a big money-spinner. I doubt if the finance experts at the big clubs would like to give up all that revenue."

The Premiership has been least affected by the weather, with only two games lost. Leicester City's home game against Tottenham Hotspur was called off because of a frozen pitch while Derby County's match against Sheffield Wednesday was cancelled on police advice.

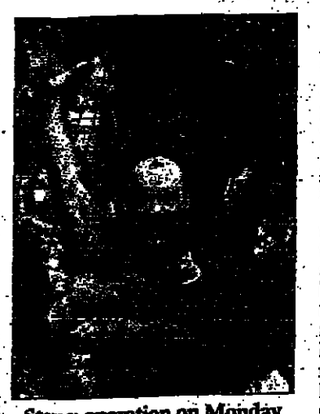
"There was no problem with the pitch, but the approach roads to the ground are treacherous," Jim Smith, the Derby manager, said.

West Bromwich Albion's first division fixture with Tranmere Rovers could depend on the efforts of supporters asked to attend The Hawthorns with shovels and brushes this morning to remove snow lying on the pitch covers. If their efforts are successful, they will be given tickets for the game.

Many FA Cup third-round ties, scheduled for Saturday, are already in danger. Wycombe Wanderers have switched their match against Bradford City to Sunday, giving them extra time to bring in a hot air balloon from Scotland to protect the surface.

Llanelli's rugby union fixture against an Italian XV was lost yesterday while the all-weather card at Southwell is the only racing meeting to survive today.

Operation will not affect Stone's plans for return



Stone: operation on Monday

BY RICHARD HOBSON

STEVE STONE, the Nottingham Forest and England midfield player, will undergo a second operation on his injured knee next Monday, three weeks behind schedule. However, he insists that the delay has been precautionary and that he will be fit for the start of next season.

Stone, 25, ruptured his patella tendon in a freak accident during the FA Carling Premiership game against Leicester City on September 7. With the nearest opponent two yards away, his heel slipped and his bodyweight turned over the knee as he was about to accept a routine pass close to the halfway line. He underwent reconstructive surgery two days later and, next week, the wire that has been holding the knee together will be removed.

"I talked it over with the surgeon, who suggested that it might be as well to leave the operation until the new year, but there is nothing to worry about and the wire is not doing any harm whatsoever while it is there," Stone said.

The delay allowed Stone, capped nine times, to spend a week before Christmas in Goa, where a fellow holidaymaker told him of the resignation of Frank Clark as manager and appointment of Stuart Pearce at the City Ground on a caretaker basis. The absence of Stone, seemingly ideal as a right wing back, has been a key reason for Forest's freefall to the bottom of the FA Carling Premiership.

"I wish I could get out there to help the lads," Stone said. "It could not really have happened at a worse time, but, once it was made clear that there is no doubt about my playing again, I just had to work as hard as possible."

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A naturally bubbly character, Stone broke his leg three times as a teenager and is thus aware of the frustration that long-term injury brings. He has been helping his wife, Judith, in the running of their sandwich shop in the nearby village of Bingham and has a weekly slot on local radio titled "Banter with the Bulldog".

Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, has monitored Stone's progress and the player could come into consideration for the World Cup qualifying game against Moldova at Wembley on September 10.

John Haselden, the Forest physiotherapist, said: "The problem with Steve is that he wants to run before he can walk. The first six months is healing and rehabilitation. He will be running before the end of the season, but it would be very, very foolish to ask him to play before then."

Neil Lennon, the Leicester City midfield player, has been charged with misconduct by the Football Association for allegedly making gestures to rival supporters. Lennon, the Northern Ireland international, was reported to the police by Newcastle United supporters for the gestures that he was claimed to have made during Leicester's 2-0 win over Newcastle on October 26.

Leicestershire police looked at a video of the incident and asked the FA to deal with the matter. Lennon has 14 days in which to respond to the charge.

Brighton have been told that they will be accepted into the GM Vauxhall Conference if they finish bottom of the Nationwide League third division, even though they will not own their own ground after this season.

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FOOTBALL: LIVERPOOL TOP CLASS IN HALF-TERM PREMIERSHIP REPORT

Leader Barnes stays ahead of the pack

ROB HUGHES

Football Commentary

The hair is receding, the feet are splayed and the pace that once made John Barnes such a thrilling athlete has to be used sparingly, no more than once or twice in a match. Yet Barnes remains in pole position, the leader, organiser and guide of Liverpool as the year turns and the race continues towards the destiny of the 1997 FA Carling Premiership title.

When Barnes scored the final goal of the old year on Sunday, it was a model of composure, an example of the quickness of eye and the acquired knowledge of a man playing his 300th league game in almost a decade of Liverpool red. If he wins a third championship medal, he will be the link between Liverpool and the title, that was broken six years ago. "The brain speeds up, the body slows down," Anthony Dowell, who, as a prince among ballet dancers, knew something of the ageing process, said.

However, Roy Evans, the Liverpool manager, having rebuilt the team around Barnes, sees it this way: "This season is defying all the normal rules. People are asking what it takes to stay up, never mind to win this championship. Leicester gave us a very difficult proposition at Anfield on Boxing Day. Southampton gave us a fair old game on Sunday ... but we've shown we are back in contention for major honours. The pleasing thing is the determination is there."

Determination, hunger, perseverance. Are all of these still in Barnes? Evans knows that Steve McManaman can give his team vitality, that Robbie Fowler can sneak goals from little opportunity. He must suspect that Liverpool lack a midfield enforcer in the mould of Roy Keane, of Manchester United, so he comes back time and again to his leader. "John Barnes doesn't surprise me because I see him every day in training," Evans said. "He has a vested interest in the championship — he needs it to come in the next few years because he doesn't know how long he will last."

Barnes has turned from a player once accused of being too laid back into possibly the pivotal performer in such a close-run championship. "It feels a long, hard season," he said. "I don't think we'll go on unbeaten, but neither will the others. The so-called lesser teams are more organised than ever before, all the top teams are capable of beating one another. This Liverpool team is potentially as good as the one in 1990: when the youngsters grow up a bit, we'll see — but a five-point lead is easily catchable if we are not up to it."

A glance at the table suggests that there are five main rivals. Manchester United have the desire, the pedigree and the youth to be champions again. They need more from Eric Cantona and less by way of inconsistency from Peter Schmeichel in the second half of the season. They must also overcome the distraction once Europe is revisited in the spring. Around that time, on the third weekend of April, we could see at Anfield the vital game, Liverpool versus United.

Arsenal must quickly arrest form that has wrought only three points from the past four games. They need David Seaman to recover from his rib injury and Ian Wright to be less irresponsible and more irrepressible. His goals are gold dust, but he misses three games through yet another suspension in January.

Wimbledon? Joe Kinnear, the manager, turning sows' ears into silk, getting the maximum from each component, works on one fifth of the audience potential of Manchester United, one tenth of the weekly income. Yet his side's 19-game unbeaten run, trusting mightily on the sprints of Ekoku and Gayle, on the promptings of Earle and Leonhardsen, fell apart at Villa Park a week ago.

It was not just that Wimbledon gifted some of the five goals, more that the team was woefully unassertive before them. Wimbledon are a defiance of logic, a romance on a shoestring and yesterday Ladbrokes shortened the odds on them from 33-1 to 25-1 to become champions.

They stand, for the moment, a place ahead of Newcastle United. How harrowed Kevin Keegan becomes as his team, with a ceiling above all others (beating Manchester United 5-0, thrashing Tottenham Hotspur 7-1), betray their pedigree through erratic defence. Peter Beardsley, older than Barnes but no less gifted in soothing a team, dips in form around this time. Newcastle also have to visit Arsenal, Manchester United, Liverpool and Wimbledon before the end of the season.

Below them, Aston Villa, have not quite recaptured the brio of last season. Losing Gary Charles and Gareth Southgate to injury, they rely over-much on Dwight Yorke and Savo Milosevic, his Serbian partner. Yet any team that can commit Sasa Curcic to the bench has an abundance of riches, if only it can be welded to self-belief.

The Premiership has a very shallow comfort zone. Chelsea, Everton, Sheffield Wednesday and, when not travelling north, Tottenham, are in it.

"The Premiership is becoming better, more teams can challenge for the title," Ruud Gullit, the Chelsea player-manager, said. He believes that England's performance during Euro 96, as much as the influx of foreign talent, has improved confidence in the game. Yet Chelsea, scarcely showing desire for the battle at Leeds or at Sunderland, raise the question of whether so many fine foreigners in one team destabilises the English club virtue.

They can play on the highest plane, but are they ready to respond to the tribal demands of the British way?

Everton and Wednesday are nearly teams: capable of frustrating anyone, but surely not ripe for honours. Tottenham are frustrating even their own supporters and their battle lies within.

Immediately below them, from Derby County down, lie the quicksands of relegation fear. Derby, Leicester City and Sunderland came up last season and all have done better than forecast, but Leicester and Sunderland, in particular, have had to run hard merely to stand still in relative mid-table calm.

Coventry City, having spent £18 million and changed managers, needed a further £1 million speculation on Darren Huckerby to give them impetus. Four successive wins, though, have suddenly propelled them from bottom to fourteenth place and they should survive. So should Leeds United, even if George Graham's infamously pragmatic means win no friends. West Ham United periodically entertain, yet still the lower reaches entertains them.

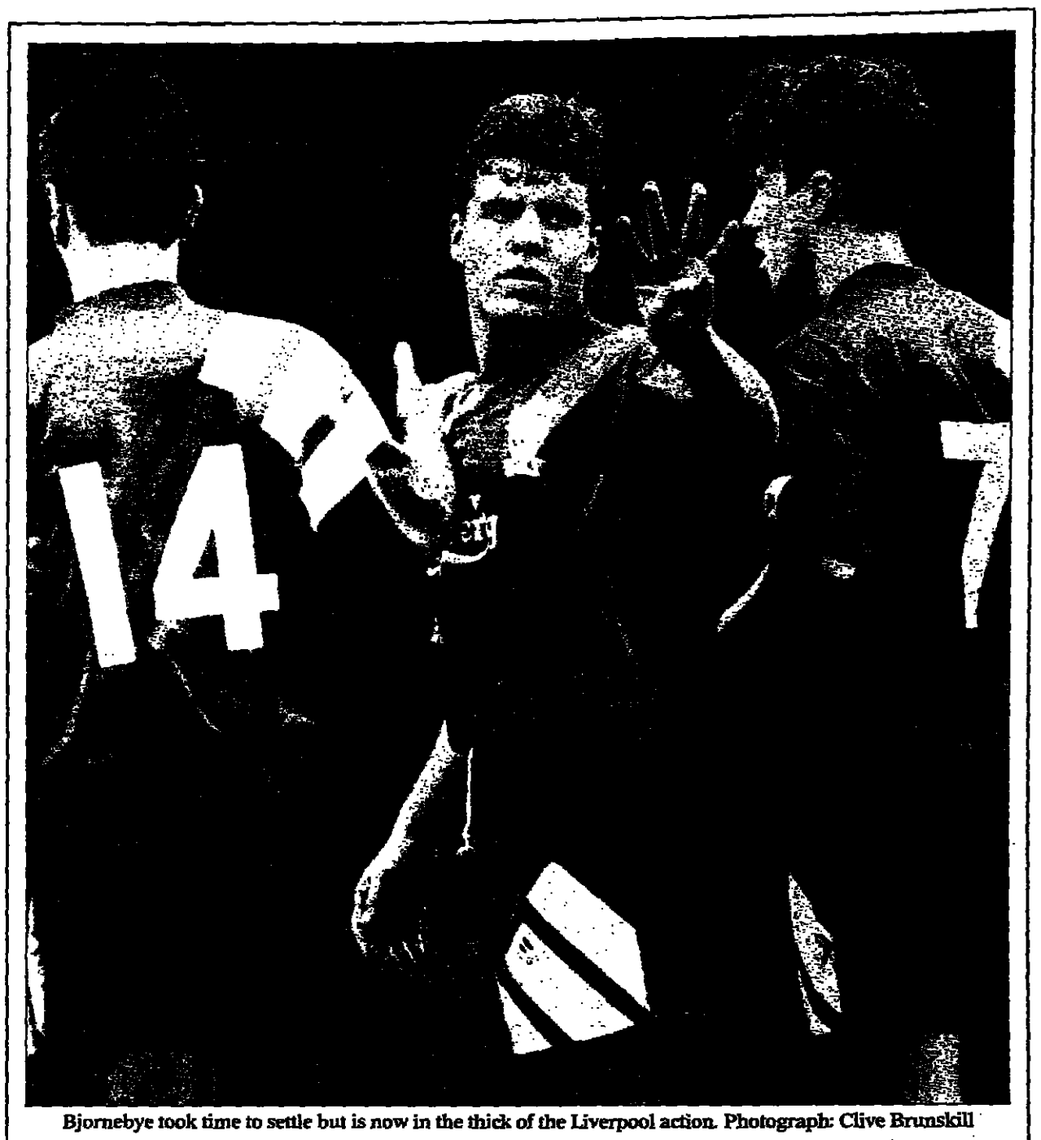
Middlesbrough, with such expensive imports and such a leaky defence, could win the Coca-Cola Cup and flirt perilously with relegation. Blackburn Rovers, re-shaped by Tony Parkes, could climb to safety now that Chris Sutton and Graeme Le Saux are fit.

Graeme Souness, the Southampton manager, arrived last summer swearing: "I certainly haven't come here to be involved in a relegation battle." Some of his purchases are better than that, but the truth lies in the table, where the Saints have sinned so often with careless giveaway goals. Last, but not least, are Nottingham Forest, whose archaic club structure and indecisive boardroom so undermined Frank Clark, the manager, that he was willing to decamp — even willing to go down to Manchester City.

Predictions are not only unkind, they are foolish when we consider that the Premiership is now as much a commercial concern as a sporting contest. Anyway, it would be easier to study meteorology and to warn of global warming while the world freezes over.

CLIVE BRUNSKILL / ALL SPORT

Barnes is still calling the shots for Liverpool as he tries to win his third championship winner's medal



Bjornebye took time to settle but is now in the thick of the Liverpool action. Photograph: Clive Brunskill

Liverpool's Norwegian deliverer supplies quality on demand

Peter Ball meets Stig Inge Bjornebye, an unsung member of the foreign legion

This season has been dominated by the excitement over football's foreign influx. The doings of Vialli and Ravanelli, Emerson, Cruyff and Berger fill the pages of tabloid and broadsheet alike, but, in Liverpool's fine run, one of the key players has been a longer serving, and much less heralded, foreigner — Stig Inge Bjornebye.

He feels finally established as an ever-present this season and is playing with visible confidence. "We've been on his case for some time to improve his confidence," Roy Evans, the Liverpool manager, said. "Confidence is a wonderful thing in football, you need to be confident to do things right, and he's been picking up on that all the time."

He has scored important goals this season already, beginning at Middlesbrough on the opening day, his first for the club, but he has also been a ready supplier to his forwards. After Liverpool's 0-0 draw with Sunderland, Peter Reid, the Sunderland manager, was moved to say: "The only threat came from set-pieces — Bjornebye's crosses are real quality."

Bjornebye arrived at Liverpool for £600,000 four years ago, in the dog days of Graeme Souness's spell as manager, as a young left back from Rosenborg BK Trondheim, then a virtually unknown club in the north of Norway. It is fair to say that it took him time to settle. Arriving at a club in turmoil did not help, and the shy 22-year-old struggled. "My first game, we lost 5-1 at Coventry," Bjornebye said, "and it went on from there really."

Yet, when he played for Norway, he looked a much better player than he did for Liverpool. "He does better away," one senior Liverpool official said at the time. "Anfield seems to intimidate him."

Bjornebye concedes the point, but there was also the footballing change. English football is often disparaged for its crudeness, but Bjornebye went to Liverpool, a team playing passing football, from a more direct club side, and an international team based on the Charles Hughes philosophy, where long diagonal balls from Bjornebye's accurate left foot were a key element in their attacking play. Obviously, it was not particularly attractive, but it was very successful.

> 'The only threat came from his crosses'

"I prefer Liverpool," Bjornebye said, "but it was hard for me to get into that style, coming from the kick and rush football to playing pass and move."

Now, confidence growing, he has adapted successfully. He began to do so two years ago, holding his place in the team that won the Coca-Cola Cup in 1995. A week later he suffered a broken leg and he was out of the game for almost a year. When he did come back, Rob Jones and then Steve Harkness stood between him and recapturing his first-team place.

Behind the quiet, polite exterior, however, there is a determined character, and Bjornebye battled on. Injuries to Jones and Harkness have opened the way for him and he has grabbed his chance with alacrity.

In the process he looks a better player, attacking with purpose but still defending solidly. Bjornebye himself believes that he is now playing the best football of his career.

"I'm a regular for the second time," he said, "but the first time there was too much variation in my performances. I hope I can stay consistent this season at a high level."

He has done so thus far, revelling in the greater opportunities offered as a wing back. "It's quite a difficult position to play in," he said. "There's a lot of running and a lot of tactical things involved, but I quite like it now.

"It helps if you are a strong runner. I wasn't as fit in the past as I am now. Sometimes, when I got the ball, I was too tired to do things with it. It's important that, when you get the ball, you feel fresh enough to give it the right touch and hit the right cross, rather than being too tired and miskicking."

The greater strength is evident in his powerful running, although he plays it down. "It's nothing major. I'm not training like Linford Christie, but, when you are coming from a broken leg to Liverpool's first team, that's a long way, and it means a lot of work," he said.

"I have to work hard at things to get better. You have got to have a steady mind, do the right things and be professional."

Nobody will doubt Bjornebye's steady mind and professionalism, but Evans sees something else this season. "You're always delighted to see the likes of Stig do well, because he's a great professional," Evans said.

"He's come through a system in Norway, and in all of Scandinavia, where they are very disciplined about the whole game. Off the back of that, he has learnt now to have a bit of free spirit himself, and that's the improvement in his game."

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TONIGHT'S LIVE PREMIERSHIP ACTION
10/11 EVERTON 9/4 DRAW BLACKBURN 5/2
Goodison Park, Kick-off 5.45pm, Live on Sky TV.
CORRECT SCORE

6/1	EVERTON	1-0	14/1 DRAW	2-2
8/1	EVERTON	2-0	8/1 BLACKBURN	1-0
15/2	EVERTON	2-1	16/1 BLACKBURN	2-0
11/2	DRAW	1-1	12/1 BLACKBURN	2-1

8/13 MAN. UTD. 12/5 DRAW ASTON VILLA 4/1
Old Trafford, Kick-off 8.00pm, Live on Sky TV
CORRECT SCORE

13/2	MAN. UTD.	1-0	6/1 DRAW	1-1
13/2	MAN. UTD.	2-0	14/1 DRAW	2-2
15/2	MAN. UTD.	2-1	10/1 VILLA	1-0
10/1	MAN. UTD.	3-1	16/1 VILLA	2-1

Other scores on request.
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Arsenal to confirm interest if Ince becomes available

By Our Sports Staff

ARSENAL would be tempted to bid for Paul Ince if Internazionale put him on the market. Arsène Wenger, their manager, said yesterday.

"We would think it over if Paul Ince became available," Wenger said. "Yes, of course. Inter will decide the future of Ince because he is under contract, but, for his quality, yes, we would be interested, just like many other clubs."

Ince, who joined Inter from Manchester United, was linked with a move to Arsenal last season, but his financial demands proved a stumbling block.

He has been the subject of racial abuse from opposing supporters in Italy and has a poor disciplinary record in Serie A, but, while Arsenal are interested in Ince, Wenger said that they were not considering a bid for Jürgen Klinsmann, the former Tottenham Hotspur striker, who is reportedly unsettled at Bayern Munich.

Manchester United's plans to strengthen their squad in their pursuit of the European Cup have been put on hold. With the qualification deadline on January 15, Alex Ferguson, the United manager, recognises that he may have to rely on his present squad when Porto arrive for the quarter-final in March.

"There are no players around, and the deadline might be coming up too soon for us," Ferguson said yesterday. "It is looking very remote now that we are going to get any player in."

Ince: under contract

Through the autumn United had been closely linked with Nadal, the outstanding international defender from Spain who had been out of favour at Barcelona, but his appearance for the club in the Cup Winners' Cup, making him ineligible to play for United in Europe, ended Ferguson's interest. That is a recurring problem.

While Ferguson seems unlikely to buy any overseas players, sorting out foreigners will be one of Frank Clark's problems at Manchester City. His first will be to deal with Nigel Clough's position. Clough is at present on loan at Nottingham Forest.

"I haven't been able to talk to him so far," Clark said, "but I need to find out what he is thinking. I would be very happy if he wants to stay at Maine Road."

Until Clough's position is clarified, Clark has refused to allow him to become cup-tied by playing for Forest on Saturday. Clough had been the target for some of City's disaffected supporters, but not the only one, with Uwe Rösler responding angrily to abuse at Barnsley last Saturday.

"Getting stick from supporters isn't very pleasant, but it is part of the game, and players have got to put up with it," Clark said. "The only way they can deal with it is by performances on the pitch. It is no good asking the fans to be patient. They've been patient at this club for a long time and we've got to give them hope."

Duffy glories in challenge posed by Edinburgh derby

By Our Sports Staff

JIM DUFFY takes charge of Hibernian for the first time today for the Edinburgh derby against Heart of Midlothian at Easter Road, welcoming the challenge.

"I don't think I could ask for a better game to begin with," Duffy, the former Dundee manager, said. "If you don't feel motivated as a player for a new year derby against your local rivals, you shouldn't be in football. After that, we have Rangers coming here on Saturday, so I could hardly have had two more exciting fixtures."

Hibernian will have to conquer their Easter Road nerves to give Duffy a winning start, for this season they have won only three games out of ten there. Duffy will be without the suspended John Hughes, but Gordon Hunter, Kevin Harper and Pat McGinlay should be fit after missing the draw away to Aberdeen on Saturday.

Hearts are likely to recall Dave McPherson, the captain, to their defence, and Neil Pointon may also return. They will be looking to John Robertson to add to his tally of goals in these spirited encounters. Robertson scored twice in the 4-1 win over Motherwell last weekend and his total of league goals for the club now stands at 202, just four short of Jimmy Wardhaugh's record.

Hearts were uplifted yesterday by the return of Gary Locke, their young defender, after a seven-month absence. He played for an hour in a reserve match against Motherwell, his first game since injuring a knee in the Scottish Cup final last May.

Leslie Deans has replaced Chris Robinson as chairman of Heart of Midlothian. The men had intended to rotate the chairmanship when they took over at Tynecastle, but instead have made the change halfway through their five-year plan.

Aberdeen travel south to face Dundee United confident that the match will go ahead because of the undersoil heating at Tannadice. Stewart McKimmie, the Aberdeen captain, is back in the squad after a three-match suspension.

United have moved to within three points of third-placed Aberdeen, whose manager, Roy Aitken, will be looking for an improvement in form after recent defeats by Kilmarnock and Celtic and the draw with Hibernian.

United have Lars Zetterlund in their squad and Tommy McLean, their manager, has added to his Scandinavian contingent by bringing in Jonas Wirmola, the Swedish defender, on a month's contract.

Jamie McQuilken is out with a throat infection, so Craig Easton, 18, is promoted to the first-team squad. "He has been doing well for the reserves," McLean said.

A morning inspection will determine whether the Fife derby between Dunfermline Athletic and Raith Rovers can go ahead at East End Park. Dunfermline, who have conceded seven goals in their past two games, to Hearts and Celtic, expect to have Craig Robertson back in action after a bout of influenza.

Raith are strengthened by the return from suspension of John Millar. A win for Raith, who have lost their past three games, would put them level with Motherwell, whose game with Kilmarnock has been postponed because of a frozen pitch.

THE TIMES NEW YEAR'S DAY GUIDE TO THE PREMIERSHIP

ARSENAL

If Arsenal cannot beat a depleted Middlesbrough, they can surely forget the Premiership. And they will still have Ian Wright, whose three-match suspension does not start until January 4: just in time for the FA Cup. Not that the Arsenal defence, which shipped water in the second half against Villa last Saturday, can afford to relax against Juninho and Ravanelli. But if Arsenal fade in the second half as they did against Villa, there must be real doubts about their stamina. **BG**

ASTON VILLA

1997 is a special year, with Villa Park celebrating its centenary when Tottenham Hotspur visit on April 19. A vast array of commemorative activities are being organised, including a colourful pre-match march from Perry Barr. It is also rumoured that some of Villa Park's culinary delights could be on offer at 1897 prices, with sausage rolls at 1p. In the real world, Villa take on Manchester United, at Old Trafford today, Newcastle United and Liverpool in swift succession. Happy New Year. **RK**

BLACKBURN ROVERS

Blackburn will make at least one signing in the next few weeks, although Tony Parkes, the caretaker manager, will no doubt act on the advice of Sven Goran Eriksson. Paul Ince is one name mentioned, and Oliver Bierhoff, of Germany, another. Less exotic is Mike Sheron, the Stoke City forward, whom Parkes has now watched twice, and a £1 million move could be in the offing. Rovers could move out of the bottom three for the first time this season if they defeat Everton today. **DM**

CHELSEA

Chelsea will be looking for revenge against a Liverpool team that pulverised them at Anfield. But there was no Gianfranco Zola in the Chelsea side then. Man-marking seems as unlikely for Zola as for Steve McManaman, of Liverpool, but it usually seems to baffle Liverpool when it is used. Supplied by McManaman, a fit Fowler becomes a threat to any defence. Chelsea will be hoping that Grodas's bizarre fumble that cost them on Saturday was just an aberration. **BG**

COVENTRY CITY

Four wins in a row could become five for Coventry today when erratic Sunderland travel to Highfield Road. Whatever Gordon Strachan, the manager, has prescribed to his previously ailing troops should be bottled and sold at a fat price, such are its apparently miraculous qualities. Steve Ogrizovic, 39, revealed his secret elixir after a club record 554th appearance in the 3-0 win against Middlesbrough on Saturday. "It's true," he said. "I take cod liver oil tablets for my dodgy knees." **RK**

DERBY COUNTY

It appears that sides are beginning to tumble Derby. Aljosa Asanovic, their key man, has been increasingly nullified during a run of five matches in which the Premiership newcomers have accrued just two points. "We have some willing workers in midfield, but he is the one we look to for a touch of quality," Jim Smith, the manager, said. Asanovic, who does not relish the physical side, can rest with the Sheffield Wednesday game today postponed because of conditions outside the ground. **RH**

EVERTON

Everton need the new year to bring a swift change of fortune. With only one win in six games, their hopes of getting into the thick of the title race are receding fast. Their record against lower opposition at Goodison in recent years, with Port Vale, Stockport and York all drawing there, is not encouraging. Today Watson, Parkinson and Kanchelskis may be pressed into service with Unsworth suspended, and both Short and Hinchcliffe out of action in the long term. **PB**

LEEDS UNITED

The holiday period was not kind to Leeds, and they need to start the new year well if the season is not to degenerate into a constant struggle against relegation. David Wetherall could return at Newcastle today, and Lee Sharpe and Rod Wallace are both hoping to be fit for a recall. If Wallace comes in, Tony Yeboah seems likely to be the man at risk, his performance at Old Trafford not convincing George Graham, the manager, that he had been wrong not to play him sooner. **PB**

LEICESTER CITY

Ian Marshall began his career as a defender before joining the forward line to good effect at Oldham. Needs must, however, and Marshall has been a revelation since Martin O'Neill, the manager, drafted him into the back three, originally as a stopgap measure. In one way the transformation began within days of Marshall's arrival from Ipswich in an £800,000 deal last August. Fed up with mickey-taking, he hacked off his flowing permed locks and thus lost his nickname of "Keegan". **RH**

LIVERPOOL

It is not the best way to spend New Year's Eve, travelling for half a day on snowbound roads, then stuck in a hotel just south of London. Most of the squad will be in bed early, so the first-footing must wait until morning. Roy Evans, the manager, is hoping that celebrations will be performed after the game at Chelsea, where victory would confirm serious title aspirations. "We have been winning matches like this one, and if we maintain such resilience, then we won't be far away," he said. **DM**

MANCHESTER UNITED

With the FA Carling Premiership, the European Cup and the FA Cup still in their sights, the new year holds rich promise for United, but Alex Ferguson, the manager, spoke too soon when he said that the return of Roy Keane and Andy Cole meant everybody was coming back to full fitness at the right time. Pallister's recurrence of a back injury and Phil Neville's glandular fever leaves United without experienced cover defensively, with Neville likely to be out for a month. **PB**

MIDDLESBROUGH

Bryan Robson, the manager, may be just ten days short of his fortieth birthday but he is contemplating starting in midfield at Arsenal today. Meanwhile, Vladimir Kinder, a Slovakian left back, awaits a work permit pending a mooted £1 million move to Teesside and Robson confirms he still hopes to sign Miguel Angel Nadal, the Spain defender, from Barcelona, and Paul Ince from Internazionale. "If Paul becomes available, we will be very interested," he said. **LT**

NEWCASTLE UNITED

How do you bring back to earth a side who were hard done by when only scoring seven? Answer, not easily. The last time Newcastle won so well, they embarked on a run that all but extinguished their title hopes. This time, according to Sir John Hall, the chairman, things will be different. "It is essential that we keep it going this time, and we will," he said. "No one has got away from us in the league. There will be four or five teams vying for the title — and we will be one of them." **DM**

NOTTINGHAM FOREST

Stuart Pearce will decide whether to continue as manager for the remainder of the season this coming Tuesday. He will meet Irving Korn, the chairman, after the extraordinary meeting next week, when shareholders could decide to back a takeover bid from a local consortium. Pearce confesses to feeling the strain after just 12 days as caretaker manager and player but much will depend on results at West Ham today and in the FA Cup third-round tie against Ipswich on Saturday. **RH**

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

It is difficult to appreciate from the league tables, but Sheffield Wednesday currently boast the longest unbeaten run in the FA Carling Premiership. No less than 11 games have passed since the last defeat, but still they are merely clinging precariously from the coat-tails of the pace-setters. "Too many draws," was the explanation of David Pleat, the manager. "But it shows we are difficult to beat, and that is always an endearing quality at this level." Indeed. Today, though, his players will be idle. **DM**

SUNDERLAND

Caring little for dietary political correctness, Peter Reid, the manager, permits his players to consume traditional English cooked breakfasts, to down lagers on coach trips back from away fixtures and he even drops them all off outside nightclubs occasionally. No wonder the spirit at Roker Park is so good. This mood explains why, despite nursing a wired-up broken jaw, Kevin Ball, the captain, has insisted on travelling to Coventry to be with his team-mates today. **LT**

HOW THEY STAND

	P	Pts	Goal diff	Last five lge games
1 Liverpool	21	42	+19	WWDDW
2 Manchester Utd	20	37	+17	DDWWW
3 Arsenal	20	37	+17	WDLDD
4 Wimbledon	19	37	+10	WWWLW
5 Newcastle	20	34	+13	DLDLW
6 Aston Villa	20	34	+10	WWWLD
7 Chelsea	20	32	+3	DLWWD
8 Everton	20	28	+2	DWDLL
9 Sheffield Wed	20	28	-1	WDDDD
10 Tottenham	20	28	-4	WDDWL
11 Derby	20	23	-5	DLLLD
12 Leicester	20	23	-7	WDLDD
13 Sunderland	20	23	-9	LWLWL
14 Coventry	20	22	-5	LWWWW
15 Leeds	20	22	-8	DDDLL
16 West Ham	19	21	-7	DLDLW
17 Middlesbrough	20	18	-13	LDLWL
18 Blackburn	19	17	-5	WDLWD
19 Southampton	20	16	-9	LLWLL
20 Nottm Forest	20	14	-18	DLWLD

SOUTHAMPTON

Yuri Maximov, the Dynamo Kiev and Ukraine midfield player, has impressed during a trial period, and Graeme Souness, the manager, has tabled an improved offer for Matt Elliott, of Oxford United. The reaction of Souness to Dave Beasant's aberration against Liverpool was the signing of Maik Taylor, the Barnet goalkeeper. Southampton were three points better off at the same stage last season, and had even won an away game, against their opponents today, Wimbledon. **NS**

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

Tottenham Hotspur's Chigwell training ground was a sombre place on Monday, as the aftershock of the 7-1 annihilation against Newcastle United still reverberated. Amid the battered morale, it also emerged that Sol Campbell and John Scales were nursing injuries. Chinks of light were almost non-existent but the form of Allan Nielsen, the three-goals-in-three-games Danish midfield player, at least bodes well. "It is getting better and better for me," he said. **RK**

WEST HAM UNITED

The crowd will be blowing bubbles at half-time today in an attempt to get Upton Park into the Guinness Book of Records and raise money for a local hospice. Harry Redknapp, the manager, contemplates changing a winning team to accommodate Raducioiu, who is finally coming to terms with the rigours of English football. "You have to work hard and you have to get kicked up in the air at times," Redknapp said. "It looks as if that is sinking in at last." **KP**

WIMBLEDON

"A phenomenal year," was the verdict of Joe Kinnear, the manager, on 1996. "The players should be proud of what they have achieved." Only 18 to go after victory at Everton, where the absence of influenza victims Earle, Holdsworth and Perry meant the return of McAllister, a midfield role for Cunningham, a right back, and a full debut for Duncan Jupp, the Scotland under-21 international, a £200,000 close-season signing from Fulham. All three could continue at Southampton. **NS**

Reports: Brian Glanville, Peter Ball, Russell Kempson, Richard Hobson, Louise Taylor, Nick Szczepanik, Keith Pike, David Maddock. Statistics: Julian Desborough

ARSENAL v MIDDLESBROUGH

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, 3-0, —, —, —, 1-1, —, —, 1-1.

HOW THEY LINE UP

ARSENAL (from): J Lukic, R Parlour, S Bould, M Keown, A Adams, N Winterburn, P Vieira, R Garde, P Merson, D Bergkamp, I Wright, J Hartson, P Shaw, S Morrow, S Marshall, A Linighan, M Rose, V Bertram.

MIDDLESBROUGH (from): G Walsh, C Liddle, C Morris, S Vickers, B Robson, N Cox, Emerson, C Blackmore, M Beck, F Ravanelli, Juninho, C Hignett, D Whyte, J A Fjortoft, A Campbell, M Summerbell.

CHELSEA v LIVERPOOL

TICKETS: Sold out

16-YEAR RECORD: 3-3, 1-1, —, 2-5, 4-2, 2-2, 0-0, 1-0, 0-0, 2-2.

HOW THEY LINE UP

CHELSEA (from): F Grodas, M Duberry, R Gullit, S Clarke, D Petrescu, C Burley, R di Matteo, E Newton, S Minto, M Hughes, G Zola, F Leboeuf, A Myers; D Wise, F Sinclair, M Nicholls, K Hitchcock, E Johnsen.

LIVERPOOL (from): D James, D Matteo, S-I Bjornebye, J McAteer, N Wright, N Ruddock, P Babb, J Barnes, S McManaman, M Thomas, S Collymore, R Fowler, A Warner, P Berger.

COVENTRY CITY v SUNDERLAND

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, —, 0-0, —, —, —, — —

HOW THEY LINE UP

COVENTRY CITY (from): S Ogrizovic, R Shaw, L Daish, P Williams, D Burrows, P Telfer, E Jess, G McAllister, J Salako, D Dublin, N Whelan, M O'Neill, K Richardson, B Borrows, M Hall, J Filan, P Ndlovu, D Huckerby.

SUNDERLAND (from): L Perez, G Hall, D Kubicki, A Melville, R Ord, D Kelly, P Bracewell, S Agnew, M Smith, S Aiston, A Pae, C Russell, M Bridges, M Gray, P Stewart, D Preece.

DERBY COUNTY v SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

EVERTON v BLACKBURN ROVERS

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, —, —, —, 2-1, 0-3, 1-2, 1-0.

HOW THEY LINE UP

EVERTON (from): N Southall, P Gerrard, E Barrett, D Unsworth, T Phelan, D Watson, C Short, A Kanchelskis, J Ebbrell, A Grant, J Parkinson, D Ferguson, G Speed, G Stuart, M Branch, P Rideout, P Holcroft.

BLACKBURN ROVERS (from): S Given, H Berg, J Kenna, C Hendry, G le Saux, W McKinlay, T Sherwood, L Bohinen, C Sutton, K Gallacher, J Wilcox, N Gudmundsson, G Fenton, N Marker, T Flowers, G Donis, P Warhurst, A Williams.

LEICESTER CITY v TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

MANCHESTER UNITED v ASTON VILLA

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 3-1, —, 1-1, 2-0, 1-1, 1-0, 1-1, 3-1, 1-0, 0-0.

HOW THEY LINE UP

MANCHESTER UNITED (from): P Schmeichel, G Neville, D May, R Johnsen, D Irwin, D Beckham, N Butt, R Keane, R Giggs, E Cantona, O G Solskjaer, P Scholes, A Cole, B McClair, K Porborsky, R van der Gouw.

ASTON VILLA (from): M Bosnich, F Nelson, A Wright, U Ehiogu, S Staunton, R Scimeca, I Taylor, M Draper, A Townsend, D Yorke, S Milosevic, S Curcic, C Tiler, J Joachim, T Johnson, M Oakes, L Hendrie, G Farrelly.

NEWCASTLE UNITED v LEEDS UNITED

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, 5-2, —, —, — 1-1, 1-2, 2-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

NEWCASTLE UNITED (from): S Hislop, S Watson, D Peacock, P Albert, J Beresford, K Gillespie, D Batty, R Lee, P Beardsley, L Ferdinand, A Shearer, L Clark, W Barton, P Srnicek, R Elliott, P Kitson, P Brayson.

LEEDS UNITED (from): N Martyn, G Kelly, A Dongo, C Palmer, G Halle, P Beesley, L Radebe, L Bowyer, M Jackson, I Rush, R Wallace, B Deane, A Yeboah, A Gray, I Harte, M Ford, M Beeney, L Sharpe.

LEADING SCORERS

15: Ian Wright (Arsenal)
13: Alan Shearer (Newcastle United)
11: Robbie Fowler (Liverpool), Dwight Yorke (Aston Villa)
9: Fabrizio Ravanelli (Middlesbrough), Les Ferdinand (Newcastle United), Matthew Le Tissier (Southampton), Ole Gunnar Solskjaer (Manchester United), Efan Ekoku (Wimbledon)

CHAMPIONSHIP BETTING

13-8: Liverpool, 2-1: Manchester United, 5-1: Arsenal, Newcastle, 12-1: Aston Villa, 25-1: Chelsea, 33-1: Wimbledon, 66-1: Everton. Odds supplied by Ladbrokes.

SOUTHAMPTON v WIMBLEDON

TICKETS: Sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-2, 2-2, 0-0, 2-2, 1-1, 1-0, 2-2, 1-0, 2-3, 0-0.

HOW THEY LINE UP

SOUTHAMPTON (from): D Beasant, F Benali, C Lundekvam, N Maddison, A Neilson, E Berkovic, U van Gobbel, M Robinson, S Charlton, R Slater, G Watson, E Ostenstad, D Hughes, M Le Tissier, M Oakley, S Basham, M Taylor.

WIMBLEDON (from): N Sullivan, D Jupp, B McAllister, D Blackwell, A Kimble, N Ardley, V Jones, K Cunningham, O Leonhardsen, E Ekoku, M Gayle, D Holdsworth, M Harford, P Fear, R Earle, C Perry, B Murphy.

WEST HAM UNITED v NOTTINGHAM FOREST

TICKETS: Seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-2, 3-2, 3-3, —, —, 3-0, —, —, 3-1, 1-0.

HOW THEY LINE UP

WEST HAM UNITED (from): L Miklosko, T Breacker, S Bilic, M Rieper, J Dicks, M Bowen, D Williamson, I Bishop, J Moncur, M Hughes, M Newell, H Porfirio, F Raducioiu, F Lampard, S Jones, K Rowland, L Sealey, S Potts, M Omoyinmi, L Hodges.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from): M Crossley, S Pearce, D Lyttle, C Cooper, S Chettle, I Woan, D Phillips, S Bletherwick, S Gemmill, D Saunders, A I Haaland, K Campbell, N Jenkan, N Clough, C Allen, B Roy, A Fettis, S Guinan.

WHERE TO WATCH ON TELEVISION

5pm Sky Sports 1 Football Special
Everton v Blackburn Rovers (5.45) (Live)
Manchester United v Aston Villa (8.0) (Live)

11.05pm BBC 1 Match of the Day (Highlights)

The official Internet site of the FA Carling Premiership is at http://www.fa-carling.com/

CRICKET: SLIDE INTO SECOND DIVISION STATUS CONFIRMED

Test league table offers England little comfort

Alan Lee identifies the partnership that offers some hope of reversing a decline

THIS may be a touch difficult to digest, but there is a silver lining of sorts to the two drawn Tests in Zimbabwe during December. By achieving stalemate against the most junior of significant cricket nations, England managed to keep Zimbabwe beneath them in the league table of the year's Test matches.

One defeat would have left England last of the nine countries, a previously unconsidered indignity.

This is perhaps no better or worse than the majority have come to believe during a depressing year in which England won only one of nine Tests, the Edgbaston match against India in June. The league table, however, gives credence to the withering assertion of Alistair Campbell, the captain of Zimbabwe, that England should now be ranked alongside his country and New Zealand as the worst of the Test-playing nations.

None of these three teams can boast a single bowler sufficiently penetrative to regularly take five or more wickets in an innings, the time-honoured measure of Test quality, and, without such bowlers, no side is likely to win very often. Unless England can swiftly harness Dominic Cork with Darren Gough, and hope they bring the best out of each other, it is difficult to see this situation altering for them.

The superficial nature of any table covering only 12 months is advertised by the presence of Sri Lanka in first place. They played only three Tests in 1996 and lost the first of them to Australia by 148 runs, completing a 3-0 series defeat. Their misleading position is entirely due to two comfortable wins over Zimbabwe in Colombo during September, hardly the mark of world champions at this form of the game.

More realistically, Australia and South Africa share second place, having each won three and lost two of their five Tests. Whatever the outcome of their present series, against West Indies and India, respectively, their three-Test meeting in South Africa in March, and the return bout in Australia, which begins in December, promise to be among the heavyweight highlights of this year.

By their own, hectic standards, Australia had an idle year in 1996, but the same will not be said of 1997, when they are scheduled to play 15 Tests. Interestingly, England played more than anyone in 1996, when two-thirds of the total of 28 Tests produced a definite result. They are due for the same number, nine, in the coming 12 months, including six summer Tests against Australia.

Pakistan won the most matches and would have their supporters in any argument over the most powerful of modern Test teams, an argument that has gathered intensity in recent years and is now increasingly in need of a measure of official adjudication.

Since the calls for a league championship of Test cricket were first made, both in *The Times* and *Wisden*, support for the idea has been growing in volume and weight.

Various countries have promised their backing and, while others remain sceptical, Australia notable among them, the matter is now sure to be debated at the summer meeting of the International Cricket Council.

Wisden's proposal for an ongoing table, in which the result of each series between pairs of countries is replaced by the outcome of the next corresponding series, seems well worth exploring.

If this was in operation now, however, few arguments would be resolved as first place would be shared by three countries — Australia, South Africa and West Indies. England would be placed two from bottom.

One-day cricket gives England supporters little consolation these days and, again, only Zimbabwe, of Test-playing nations, fared worse than Michael Atherton's team during 1996.

A woeful World Cup campaign, preceded by six one-day defeats in South Africa, was largely responsible.

The number of one-day matches continues to spiral alarmingly. There was an average of one such game every three days during 1996 and Pakistan, those voracious disciples of the art, played 38 of them.

Despite winning the World Cup with vibrant, innovative cricket, Sri Lanka finish only second in the year's exchanges.

South Africa are clearly top by dint of a remarkable record of 25 wins from 30 limited-overs games. I thought at the time they should have won the World Cup. Now I am certain of it.

Gough: big part to play

1996 TABLES

Test matches

	P	W	L	D	% won
1 Sri Lanka	3	2	1	0	66.66
2 Australia	5	3	2	0	60.00
South Africa	5	3	2	0	60.00
4 Pakistan	7	4	1	2	57.14
5 West Indies	5	2	2	1	40.00
6 India	8	3	3	2	37.50
7 New Zealand	6	1	2	3	16.66
8 England	9	1	3	5	11.11
9 Zimbabwe	8	0	3	5	0.00

Limited-overs internationals

	P	W	L	T	NR	% won
1 South Africa	30	25	5	0	0	83.33
2 Sri Lanka	29	18	10	1	0	62.06
3 Pakistan	38	23	15	0	0	60.52
4 Australia	26	13	13	0	0	50.00
West Indies	20	10	10	0	0	50.00
6 India	32	13	18	0	1	41.93
7 N Zealand	22	9	12	1	0	40.90
8 England	20	7	12	0	1	36.84
9 Zimbabwe	15	3	12	0	0	20.00
UAE	5	1	4	0	0	20.00
11 Kenya	8	1	7	0	0	12.50
12 Holland	5	0	5	0	0	0.00

% won column excludes no result matches
☐ *Compiled by Bill Frindall*

Cork: hope for future

TEST SERIES AVERAGES

England

Batting

	M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Avge	100	50	Ct/s
J P Crawley	2	3	1	166	112	83.00	1	0	6
A J Stewart	2	4	1	241	101*	80.33	1	1	5
N V Knight	2	4	0	197	96	49.25	0	2	2
N Hussain	2	4	0	130	113	32.50	1	0	2
G P Thorpe	2	4	1	70	50*	23.33	0	1	1
P C R Tufnell	2	2	1	11	9	11.00	0	0	1
R D B Croft	2	2	0	21	14	10.50	0	0	2
C White	1	1	0	9	9	9.00	0	0	0
M A Atherton	2	4	0	34	16	8.50	0	0	2
D Gough	2	3	1	7	3*	3.50	0	0	1
A D Mullally	2	2	0	4	4	2.00	0	0	1
C E W Silverwood	1	1	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	1

* denotes not out

Bowling

	O	M	R	W	Avge	Best	5w	10w
C E W Silverwood	25	8	71	4	17.75	3-63	0	0
R D B Croft	92	26	178	8	22.25	3-39	0	0
D Gough	64	16	171	7	24.42	4-40	0	0
P C R Tufnell	82.5	19	192	7	27.42	4-61	0	0
C White	16	4	41	1	41.00	1-41	0	0
A D Mullally	64	16	150	3	50.00	1-32	0	0

Zimbabwe

Batting

	M	I	NO	Runs	HS	Avge	100	50	Ct/s
P A Strang	2	3	1	104	47*	52.00	0	0	0
A D R Campbell	2	3	0	135	84	45.00	0	1	7
A Flower	2	3	0	132	112	44.00	1	0	3
G W Flower	2	3	0	116	73	38.66	0	1	3
D L Houghton	2	3	0	100	37	33.33	0	0	2
A J Waller	2	3	0	69	50	23.00	0	1	1
G J Whittall	2	3	0	64	56	21.33	0	1	1
H H Streak	2	3	1	34	19	17.00	0	0	0
E A Brandes	1	1	0	9	9	9.00	0	0	0
B C Strang	1	2	1	7	4*	7.00	0	0	1
M H Dekker	1	1	0	2	2	2.00	0	0	1
S V Carlisle	1	2	0	4	4	2.00	0	0	2
H K Olonga	2	3	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0

Bowling

	O	M	R	W	Avge	Best	5w	10w
G J Whittall	42	13	69	5	13.80	4-18	0	0
P A Strang	116.4	27	259	10	25.90	5-12	1	0
H H Streak	89.1	20	240	8	30.00	4-43	0	0
H K Olonga	41	3	160	5	32.00	3-90	0	0
E A Brandes	37	12	80	0	—	—	0	0
G W Flower	22	5	65	0	—	—	0	0
B C Strang	17	5	54	0	—	—	0	0

☐ Source: TCCB/PA Cricket Record

Taylor, despite building a fine record as Australia's captain, has not passed 50 in his past 12 Test innings

Australian certainties undermined

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA are still licking their wounds after surrendering the third Test to West Indies in Melbourne last week, but, in the world of modern international cricket, there is not much time for reflection. Today, at the Sydney Cricket Ground, it is on with the motley as the Carlton and United series resumes with a day-night match between Australia and Pakistan.

The what series? You may well ask. The annual three-nation one-day contest has been renamed, but the effect remains the same. At the height of the Australian summer three teams play off for places in a best-of-three final later this month. Although it is nonsense cricket, it generates plenty of dollars for the Australian Cricket Board and stimulates what Ken Dodd calls the "chuckle muscle".

In the aftermath of the Test defeat, however, Australians are beginning to wonder if there is too much one-day cricket. For the first time, last year, their team played more days of limited-overs cricket than the Test variety. They remain the best side in the world over five days but, to remain there, there may have to be an adjustment of interest.

To English eyes, it seems peculiar that a single defeat has led to such agitated debate, particularly as Australia still lead in the series, but there is a general feeling that runs and wickets in the Sheffield Shield — the domestic equivalent of the English county championship — count for less than they once did.

A proposal from the Victorian Cricket Association, to reduce the number of games played, and to avoid clashes with Test matches, has been received sympathetically. At the moment Australia Test players turn out infrequently for their state sides. David Boon, who retired last year, once went a whole season without playing for Tasmania and Mark Taylor, the national captain, is not often found opening the batting for New South Wales.

A debate about the quality of the domestic game is familiar to English cricket-lovers. To Australians, who have come to regard the Sheffield Shield as the strongest competition in the world, the events of the last week have come as a bit of a shock. All of a sudden people are asking: How good are our bright young sparks?

It has not yet reached the point where runs have become a false currency, but, as they struggle to find replacements for Boon and Border, and Dean Jones for that matter, people are wondering whether the likes of Ponting, Bevan and Langer are quite as good as they have been marked. Ponting has been dropped from the Test side, Bevan is in and out and Langer must wait to see whether he is retained for the fourth Test, in Adelaide.

This fevered debate has even extended to Taylor, an outstanding captain who has not passed 50 in his past 12 Test innings. The fact that he lacks a regular opening partner has not helped him come to terms with this loss of form, although he claims not to be concerned about his lean trot.

When he could do with getting some decent match practice, Taylor must instead lead Australia in this interminable one-day series. By the time they meet West Indies in Adelaide on January 25, Australia will probably have played another eight limited-overs games. Stuart Law and Tom Moody return to the fold and Andrew Bichel, a fast-medium bowler, makes his international debut.

Knighthood brings Bedser just reward for old-fashioned virtues

John Woodcock pays tribute to a great England bowler who still commands universal respect

Sir Alec: big-hearted

The citation pertaining to Alec Bedser's new year knighthood, the fifteenth to be awarded to anyone from the world of cricket, picked out his services to the game as a player and an administrator. There could be no mention of his unwavering, uncompromising defence of old-fashioned virtues, whether to do with batting, bowling, business or behaviour, for which he is so widely renowned.

It was Arthur Mailey, the Australian artist, wit and leg break and googly bowler, who first said, when another batsman was given a handle to his name, that the fast bowler to be knighted was Sir Francis Drake. That was before Gubby Allen and Richard Hadlee were given their knighthoods, and they both made Test hundreds in addition to bowling fast and well. For many years, too, Allen had been the *eminence grise* at Lord's when the honour came his way.

As a cricketer, Bedser was a bowler pure and simple. From the time he took 22 wickets in his first two Test matches, against India in 1946, until his batteries started to run down in 1954, he was the pillar of England's attack. The Australians brought the best out of him, as well as taking him to their hearts. In successive series against them, there in 1950-51 and in England in 1953, he took an astonishing 66 wickets at 17.6 apiece.

Sir Donald Bradman still talks about the leg cutter with which Bedser bowled him for a duck in the first innings of the Adelaide Test match in 1946-47. They have been the firmest of friends since and have kept in regular touch. Nobody will be more delighted than the Don that, 40 years on, Alec has now been knighted, though many will be just as pleased, the Prime Minister, an inveterate Surrey supporter, among them, as well, of course, as Alec's still nearly identical twin, Eric.

Broad-shouldered, big-hearted and with a classical action, Alec Bedser bowling was a study in marble and bronze. With his great hands, he could make the leg cutter behave like a fast leg break, and no sun was too hot or day too long for him. He gained pace off the pitch, just as Maurice Tate, another from the same mould, had. If I saw Alec bowl a long hop, I do not remember it. Even today, nothing vexes him more than a young bowler with a 30-yard run-up landing the ball in his own half of the pitch.

It was always fun, as indeed it still is, to be present at Alec's daily, rather high-pitched, lamentations. He still has much wisdom to impart, but the young do not listen any more as they think he is out of date. That is a real sadness, and they do not know what they are missing.

As a selector from 1962 to 1989 and chairman from 1969 to 1981, as manager of two MCC sides to Australia and assistant manager of another, as president of Surrey in 1987 and as someone who answers every call upon his good nature, readily and free of charge, Bedser adds renown to the following list of cricketing knights, given in alphabetical order:

Sir George "Gubby" Allen, Sir Donald Bradman, Sir Neville Cardus (though his services to music were a contributory factor), Sir Colin Cowdrey, Sir Richard Hadlee, Sir Jack Hobbs, Sir Leonard Hutton, Sir Francis Lacey (secretary of MCC, 1898 to 1926), Sir Henry Leveson-Gower, Sir Garfield Sobers, Sir Frederick Toone (manager of three MCC tours to Australia), Sir Pelham Warner, Sir Clyde Walcott and Sir Frank Worrell. The third of the three Ws, Sir Everton Weekes, is another, though his public service in Barbados, as well as his prowess at bridge, which he played internationally, may have had something to do with that.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Bristow pitches for knockout contest

ERIC BRISTOW, the former "King of Darts", became the first player to qualify for the quarter-finals of the Red Band world championship at Purfleet yesterday but then launched an attack on the group system.

Bristow scrambled through to the last eight, despite a 3-1 defeat by Gary Mawson, as he had the best legs difference in his three-man group. He had beaten Bob Anderson, the former Embassy world champion, in his opening match, with Anderson then beating Mawson, and the triangle being completed with the Mawson's victory yesterday.

However, Bristow had a difference of plus four, 20 legs to 16, with Anderson, at 17-17, in second place and Mawson third at 16-20. After his defeat, Bristow said: "I think that if you are beaten in any match then you should be on your way home.

"Let's have 32 players and a straight knockout. I worked it out last night that having beaten Bob Anderson by 11 legs to six I could afford to lose by four legs to Mawson and still get through to the quarters."

Squash: Simon Parke, of Yorkshire, has followed up his return to national No 1 with a promotion to No 5 on the new world ranking list, issued yesterday by the Professional Squash Association on which Jansher Khan, of Pakistan, the world champion, maintains his long tenure at No 1.

Rugby league: Norland, an amateur team from Humberside, have been ejected from the Silk Cut Challenge Cup for playing two registered professionals in their first round victory over Milton. The Rugby Football League ruled that Norland fielded two professionals in Rob Hutchinson (Hull KR) and Darren Grice (Featherstone) and reinstated Milton.

Tennis: Martin Lee, of Great Britain, is thirteenth in the end-of-year ITF junior world rankings for boys' singles and fourth in the doubles. Sebastien Grosjean, the European champion, from France, topped both events, with Amelie Mauresmo, his compatriot, taking the girls' singles. In the girls' doubles, Ekaterina Roubanova was eighth for Britain.

FOR THE RECORD

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

SAN DIEGO: Holiday Bowl: Colorado 33 Washington 21

ATHLETICS

FELL RUNNING: Keighley: Auld Lang Syne fell race (6 miles, 1,000ft): Men: 1 [illegible] Holmes (Bingley) 43min 28sec; 2, M Woods (Clayton-le-Moors) 44:18; 3, C Moses (Bingley) 45:12; 4, A Maloney (Rochdale) 45:16; 5, D Woodhead (Horwich) 45:27; 6, I Ferguson (Bingley) 45:33. Over-40: [illegible] Crossland (Bingley) 8th 45:52. Women: 1, S Rowell (Pudsey and Bramley) 20th 46:51; 2, N Drake (Spenborough) [illegible] W35 41st) 51:57; 3, J Shotter (Pudsey and Bramley, 48th) 53:13. Under-18: A Greer (Spenborough) 52:28

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Cleveland 108 Minnesota 96; Detroit 97 Orlando 85; New York 96 New Jersey 86; Washington 92 Charlotte 101; Chicago 81 Indiana 79; Houston 98 Seattle 91; Denver 102 Boston 104; Phoenix 130 Sacramento 82; Vancouver 98 San Antonio 96; LA Clippers 115 Utah 101

BOWLS

MACHYNLLETH: Welsh women's national pairs qualifier: Second round: D Hagreavy and P Lewis (Radnor) bt S Chapman and D Evans (Radnor) 19-12; M Hale and H Roberts (Firth) bt S Pelvin and G Westwood (Firth) 32-16; M Powell and K Jones (Severn Valley) bt M White and A Davies (Bro Dyfi) 24-16; S King and M Hopkins (Radnor) bt L Livesey and A Pugh (Severn Valley) 23-20; P Summerfield and J Jones (Radnor) bt E Norcup and C McEwen (Firth) 21-13; J Ellis and V Lingard (Bro Dyfi) bt M Evans and M Morris (Severn Valley) 31-14; M Northover and C Beer (Firth) bt H Wilson and K Pearce (Severn Valley) 21-18; J Davies and B Morgan (Radnor) bt L Williams and D Rowlands (Radnor) 21-16. Quarter-finals: Hagreavy and Lewis bt Hale and Roberts 25-12; King and Hopkins bt Powell and Jones 25-13; Ellis and Lingard bt Summerfield and Jones 17-15; Davies and Morgan bt Northover and Beer 33-8. Semi-finals: King and Hopkins bt Hagreavy and Lewis 19-7; Davies and Morgan bt Ellis and Lingard 25-8. Final: Davies and Morgan bt King and Hopkins 21-19

DARTS

PURFLEET, Essex: Red Band world championship: Group A: R Anderson (Eng) bt G Mawson (Can) 3-1; G Mawson (Can) bt E Bristow (Eng) 3-1. Group D: G Verrier (US) bt C Mason (Eng) 3-1. Group E: S Paso (Eng) bt C Lazarenko (Eng) 3-1. Group F: J Lowe (Eng) bt P Lim (US) 3-1. Group G: S Downs (US) bt S Burgess (Eng) 3-1. Group H: S Brown (US) bt R Gardner (Eng) 3-2.

FOOTBALL

Monday's late results

ICIS LEAGUE: Premier division: Postponed: Oxford City v Staines.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Postponed: Whitchurch v Bemerton Heath.

IRISH LEAGUE: Coca-Cola Cup: First round: First leg: Postponed: Omagh v Portadown.

HOCKEY

MILTON KEYNES: Women's territorial tournaments: Under 21: West 2 East 2; North 0 South 2; Midlands 2 West 1.

Final positions

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
East	4	2	2	0	9	5	8
South	4	2	1	1	6	4	7
Midlands	4	2	0	2	6	4	6
West	4	1	1	2	5	8	4
North	4	1	0	3	3	8	3

Under 18: Midlands 0 North 1, South 0 East [illegible] 0 Midlands 5. Final positions: 1, East 12; 2, North 9; 3, Midlands 6.

Under 16: East 1 South 0; West 4 North 1; Midlands 5 East 0. Final positions: 1, Midlands 12; 2, East 6; 3, West 6.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Detroit 3 Phoenix 5; Ottawa 3 Anaheim 4; Pittsburgh 5 Washington 3; Toronto 2 NY Islanders 0; Dallas 2 NY Rangers 3; Edmonton 2 Los Angeles 1

RUGBY UNION

TOUR MATCH: Postponed: Llanelli v Italy XV

IRELAND (v Italy, at Lansdowne Road, January 4): C M P O'Shea (London Irish), J A Topping (Ballymena), J C Bell (Northampton), M C McCall (Dungannon), D J Crotty (Garryowen), P A Burke (Bristol), S C McIvor (Garryowen), N J Popplewell (Newcastle), K G M Wood (Harlequins, captain), P S Wallace (Saracens), D S Corkery (Bristol), G M Fulcher (London Irish), J W Davidson (London Irish), E R P Miller (Leicester), A G Foley (Shannon). Replacements: D G Humphreys (London Irish), N A Hogan (Terenure College), W D McBride (Malone), P S Johns (Saracens), P Flavin (Blackrock College), A T H Clarke (Northampton)

SAILING

BT GLOBAL CHALLENGE: Second leg (Rio de Janeiro to Wellington): Distance to Wellington: 1, Group 4 (finished 00 16 30GMT Sunday); 2, Save The Children (03.08.12); 3, Toshiba Wave Warrior (14.27.23); 4, Motorola (23.06.03); 5, Global Teamwork (08.05.24 yesterday); 6, Commercial Union (08.15.32); 7, Pause To Remember (13.23.33); 8, Nuclear Electric 10; 9, Ocean Rover 142; 10, 3Com 233; 11, Courtaulds Int 242; 12, Time & Tide 250; 13, Concert 408; 14, Heath Insured II 479

TENNIS

ADELAIDE: Men's tournament: First round: P Rafter (Aus) bt J Salzenstein (US) 6-4, 6-3; T Johansson (Swe) bt G Bianco (Sp) 6-4, 6-1; J Stark (US) bt A Medvedev (Ukr) 6-1, 6-1; J Tarango (US) bt M Damm (Cz) 6-2, 6-3; B Ulihrach (Cz) bt N Pereira (Ven) 6-4, 6-4; S Draper (Aus) bt A Radulescu (Ger) 6-3, 3-6, 6-3; J Bjorkman (Swe) bt N Kulti (Swe) 7-5, 6-1; K Kucera (Slovakia) bt S Stolle (Aus) 6-1, 4-6, 6-0.

DOHA: Men's tournament: First round: H Arazi (Mor) bt L Paes (India) 6-2, 6-3; D Hrbaty (Slovakia) bt D Pescariu (Rom) 6-7, 7-5, 6-2; C Pozzi (Nor) bt Sultan Khalfan (Qatar) 6-2, 6-0; P Korda (Cz) bt S Simian (Fr) 6-1, 6-2; T Muster (Austria) bt H Gumy (Arg) 7-5, 6-4; S Bruguera (Sp) bt M Stich (Ger) 6-3, 6-1; J Sanchez (Sp) bt G Raoux (Fr) 6-2, 4-6, 6-4; M Norman (Swe) bt J A Viloca (Sp) 6-3, 6-0

PERTH: Hopman Cup: Group A: Australia bt France 2-1 (Australia names first: N Bradtke lost to M Pierce 6-7, 1-6; M Philippoussis bt G Forget 7-6, 6-2; Philippoussis and Bradtke bt Forget and Pierce 7-6, 7-6)

GOLD COAST, Australia: Women's tournament: First round: A Carlsson (Swe) bt A Miller (US) 7-6, 6-3; M Oremans (Hol) bt M Werdel Witmeyer (US) 4-6, 6-4, 6-4; C Cristea (Rom) bt H Sukova (Cz) 6-4, 6-4; J Kandarr (Ger) bt P Schnyder (Switz) 6-4, 6-3

AUCKLAND: Women's tournament: First round: S Cacic (US) bt I Gorrochategui (Arg) 6-3, 7-5; P Hy-Boulais (Can) bt J Watanabe (US) 5-7, 7-5, 7-5; J Husarova (Slovakia) bt C Torrens-Valero (Sp) 6-2, 6-2; S Pitkowski (Fr) bt A Olsza (Pol) 6-2, 6-2; R Hiraki (Japan) bt D van Roost (Bel) 6-3, 0-6, 6-2

POOLS DIVIDENDS

LITTLEWOODS: December 28: Treble chance: 23pts £273,652.90; 22pts £2,546.20; 21pts £283.25; 20pts £33.55. Half-time: No client with max 24pts (the £250,000 allocated to this dividend is equally divided among the full-time results). December 28: Treble chance: 24pts £107,845.55; 23pts £618.80; 22pts £49.55; 21pts £10.45. Half-time: 23pts £22,900.75.

VERNONS: December 28: Treble chance: 24pts £59,861.80; 23 £370.20; 22 £57.75. Super Shots: £32.65. Premier 10: £145.05 (past or nine correct).

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SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Conditions Off/p	Runs to resort	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
ANDORRA								
Soldeu	25	155	good	powder	good	snow	-2	31/12
(Excellent skiing with light powder at all levels)								
AUSTRIA								
Kitzbühel	10	50	icy	varied	fair	sun	-10	25/12
(Decent snow available but icy patches on busy runs)								
Obergurgl	45	145	good	varied	fair	cloud	-9	26/12
(Some low runs now hard-packed; flat light)								
Söll	15	60	good	crust	icy	sun	-8	24/12
(Upper slopes still good; snow machines topping up)								
St Anton	45	190	good	varied	icy	cloud	-7	23/12
(Good skiing most pistes; no queues for lifts)								
CANADA								
Whistler	80	160	good	varied	good	snow	-9	30/12
(All lifts and runs open; fresh snow)								
FRANCE								
Alpe d'Huez	80	240	fair	varied	fair	fair	-12	28/12
(Pistes now getting very hard with some icy spots)								
Megève	60	180	good	powder	good	cloud	-6	31/12
(Excellent snow conditions; odd icy patch)								
Méribel	60	140	fair	varied	fair	cloud	-6	20/12
(Pistes now very hard in cold temperatures)								
Val Thorens	160	240	good	crust	good	cloud	-10	20/12
(Excellent skiing overall; all links open)								
ITALY								
Cervinia	150	300	good	varied	good	fine	-8	23/12
(All pistes excellent; good skiing)								
Livigno	75	230	powder	powder	good	snow	-14	31/12
(Fresh powder at all levels; good skiing)								
SWITZERLAND								
Mürren	60	160	good	powder	good	snow	-8	30/12
(Excellent skiing with new snow; poor visibility)								
Saas Fee	85	295	good	varied	fair	cloud	-9	30/12
(Mixed visibility but snow good; pistes busy)								
Villars	30	110	good	powder	fair	snow	-3	30/12
(Fresh snow on good base; excellent skiing)								
Wengen	40	100	good	varied	fair	fine	-7	30/12
(Good skiing in cold conditions; all runs complete)								
UNITED STATES								
Mammoth	240	340	good	varied	good	fair	-4	28/12
(Excellent skiing after recent heavy snowfalls)								

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L — lower slopes; U — upper.

The Times calendar of sport 1997

England no longer the main draw

Australia should retain the Ashes easily

Alan Lee, cricket correspondent, says

This may sound a heresy, but it is a stark measure of England's cricketing decline that the Ashes series this summer barely rates a mention on Australia's current agenda. They have business to conclude with West Indies and an unresolved argument with South Africa. Only then will attention turn to a contest in which success is no longer a hope but an expectation.

Of the four Ashes series in the past eight years, England's best performance came in the most recent, which they only lost 3-1. The match tally, over that period, reads 14 wins by Australia, two by England and six games drawn. Small wonder that the possibility of surrendering the little urn this year will not cross the mind of a single Australian.

This lack of respect for English cricket is, of course, not endemic to Australians but tradition dictates that it is their scorn which hurts the most. The length and strength of the oldest rivalry in the game still has a unique attraction in this country and the lowering of a reciprocal regard is to be regretted and resented.

There is one glaringly obvious solution: the primacy of the Ashes would be restored immediately if only England could win this summer. However, having recently seen Australia demolish West Indies twice, and contrasted it with England's labours against the country cousins of Zimbabwe, I cannot offer much confidence.

To win Test matches with any consistency, a team needs batsmen capable of amassing 350-plus in most first innings and bowlers equipped to dismiss opponents twice. England have neither; Australia have both.

This is no longer a settled Australian side. There have been enforced changes to the top order, with Michael Slater out of sorts and no obvious replacement for the retired David Boon yet identified. With Craig McDermott continually prone to injury the seam bowling depends overmuch on the emerging Glenn McGrath.

They could be thought vulnerable if only England would show a little form ... and if only Shane Warne was not steadily restoring the self-belief and resourcefulness of the most effective wicket-taker in the world today. If Warne maintains his recovery from career-threatening injuries to spinning finger and shoulder, he will provide a treat for spectators and a recurring nightmare for batsmen around England.

The Australians, who are to be managed by Alan Crompton, coached by Geoff Marsh and captained, barring unforeseen calamities, by Mark Taylor, are to have a brief break at home following their series in South Africa and will not arrive in London until May 13. They play two days later, gratifyingly upholding one fine tradition by visiting Arundel as the first of four one-day fixtures prior to the Texaco Trophy, staged this year at Headingley, the Oval and Lord's.

Because of this, they will not begin their first-class programme until May 27 and will have only two three-day games before the first Cornhill Test, at Edgbaston on June 5. After such a demanding programme between October and April, however, rustiness is unlikely to be a weakness for England to exploit.

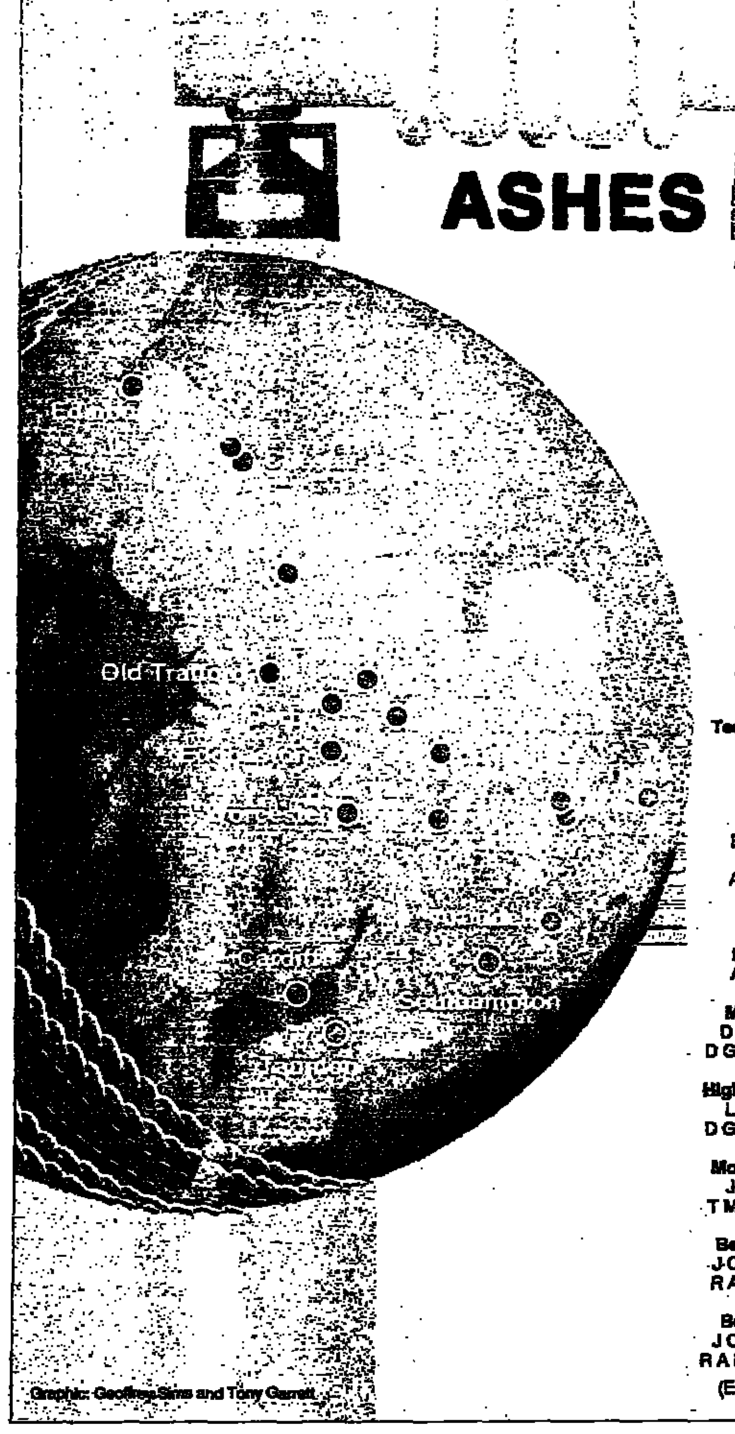
There are to be six Tests in the series, an illogical number designed unashamedly to maximise the commercial potential of the summer. With the possible exception of Headingley, where dwindling Test crowds are almost as great a concern as the deteriorating behaviour within them, every venue is likely to sell out its first three days well in advance.

Warne apart, interest in the Australians this year may focus on the remarkable Steve Waugh, argued by some statistics to be the best Test match player in the world, and on the stringy, skilful McGrath, of whom English audiences as yet know little.

England's best prospects of being competitive rest with a new-ball attack of Dominic Cork and Darren Gough, thus far irritatingly elusive, and perhaps on the emergence of young men such as Chris Silverwood, Mark Butcher and Adam Hollioake.

It was Hollioake who captained England A's successful tour of Australia this winter, making a start at chipping away a decade of growing contempt. There much more to be done before Australian respect is fully recovered.

ASHES TOUR 1997



Graphic: Geoffrey Sims and Tony Garrett

May
13 *(approx)* Arrive in London
15 Duke of Norfolk's XI at Arundel (one day)
17 Northamptonshire at Northampton (one day)
18 Worcestershire at Worcester (one day)
20 Durham at Chester-le-Street (one day)
22 First Texaco Trophy one-day international at Headingley
24 Second Texaco Trophy one-day international at the Oval
25 Third Texaco Trophy one-day international at Lord's
27-29 Gloucestershire or Sussex or Surrey (three days) depending on Benson and Hedges Cup qualifying matches
31-June 2 Derbyshire at Derby (three days)

June
5-9 FIRST CORNHILL TEST match at Edgbaston
11-13 Northamptonshire or Nottinghamshire or Durham (three days) depending on Benson and Hedges Cup semi-finals
14-16 Leicestershire at Leicester (three days)
19-23 SECOND CORNHILL TEST match at Lord's
25-27 British Universities at the Parks (three days)
28-30 Hampshire at Southampton (three days)

July
3-7 THIRD CORNHILL TEST match at Old Trafford
9 Minor Counties at Jesmond (one day)
12 Scotland at Edinburgh (one day)
16-18 Glamorgan at Cardiff (three days)
19-21 Middlesex at Lord's (three days)
24-28 FOURTH CORNHILL TEST match at Headingley

August
1-4 Somerset at Taunton (four days)
7-11 FIFTH CORNHILL TEST match at Trent Bridge
16-18 Kent at Canterbury (three days)
21-25 SIXTH CORNHILL TEST match at the Oval

ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA RECORDS

Tests played 285
England won 90
Australia won 111
Drawn 84

Test record in England
England won 38
Australia won 38
Drawn 59

Highest total
England 903-7 dec (1938)
Australia 729-6 dec (1930)

Lowest total
England 52 (1948)
Australia 36 (1902)

Most runs in series
D I Gower 732 (1985)
D G Bradman 974 (1930)

Highest individual score
L Hutton 364 (1938)
D G Bradman 334 (1930)

Most wickets in series
J C Laker 46 (1956)
T M Alderman 42 (1981)

Best innings bowling
J C Laker 10-53 (1956)
R A Massie 8-53 (1972)

Best match bowling
J C Laker 19-90 (1956)
R A Massie 16-137 (1972)

(England names first)

THE STORY OF THE ASHES

When Australia won in England in 1882, the *Sporting Times* ran a mock obituary of English cricket, noting that "The body will be cremated and the Ashes taken to Australia." Winning a Test series in Australia the following winter, the England captain, the Hon. Ivo Bligh, was presented with the ashes of a ball in this urn. After his death in 1927 the urn was presented to MCC and can now be seen in the museum at Lord's.

OVERSEAS CRICKET

Jan 1: Second one-day international, Zimbabwe v England, Harare; World Series, Australia v Pakistan, Sydney
Jan 2-6: Second Test match, South Africa v India, Cape Town
Jan 3: Third one-day international, Zimbabwe v England, Harare; World Series, West Indies v Pakistan, Brisbane.
Jan 5: World Series, Australia v West Indies, Brisbane
Jan 7: World Series, Australia v Pakistan, Hobart
Jan 10: Tour match, New Zealand Academy XI v England, New Plymouth; World Series, West Indies v Pakistan, Perth.
Jan 12: World Series, West Indies v Australia, Perth.
Jan 13-16: Tour match, NZC Selection XI v England, Palmerston North.
Jan 14: World Series, West Indies v Pakistan, Sydney
Jan 16: World Series, Pakistan v Australia, Melbourne
Jan 16-20: Third Test match, South Africa v India, Johannesburg
Jan 18: World Series, first final, Sydney
Jan 18-21: Tour match, Northern Districts v England, Hamilton.
Jan 20: World Series, second final, Melbourne
Jan 22: World Series, third final, Melbourne
Jan 23: Triangular tournament, India v South Africa, Bloemfontein
Jan 24-28: First Test match, New Zealand v England, Auckland
Jan 25: Triangular tournament, South Africa v Zimbabwe, Centurion
Jan 25-29: Fourth Test match, West Indies v Australia, Adelaide
Jan 27: Triangular tournament, India v Zimbabwe, Paarl
Jan 29: Triangular tournament, South Africa v Zimbabwe, Cape Town
Jan 30-Feb 2: Tour match, New Zealand A v England, Wanganui
Jan 31: Triangular tournament, South Africa v Zimbabwe, Johannesburg
Feb 1-5: Fifth Test match, West Indies v Australia, Perth
Feb 2: *Triangular tournament, India v South Africa, Port Elizabeth.*
Feb 4: Triangular tournament, India v South Africa, East London
Feb 6-10: Second Test match, New Zealand v England, Wellington.
Feb 7: Triangular tournament, India v Zimbabwe, Centurion
Feb 9: Triangular tournament, India v Zimbabwe, Benoni
Feb 12: Triangular tournament, final, Durban
Feb 14-18: *Third Test match, New Zealand v England, Christchurch*
Feb 15: First one-day international, Zimbabwe v India, Bulawayo
Feb 17: Second one-day international, Zimbabwe v India, Harare
Feb 20: First one-day international, New Zealand v England, Christchurch
Feb 23: Second one-day international, New Zealand v England, Auckland
Feb 26: Third one-day international, New Zealand v England, Napier
Feb 28-Mar 4: First Test match, South Africa v Australia, Johannesburg
Mar 1: Fourth one-day international, New Zealand v England, Auckland
Mar 4: Fifth one-day international, New Zealand v England, Wellington
Mar 6-10: First Test match, West Indies v India, Jamaica
Mar 7-11: First Test match, New Zealand v Sri Lanka, Hamilton
Mar 14-18: Second Test match, West Indies v India, Trinidad; Second Test match, South Africa v Australia, Port Elizabeth. *Second Test match, New Zealand v Sri Lanka, Wellington*
Mar 21-25: Third Test match, South Africa v Australia, Pretoria
Mar 22: First one-day international, New Zealand v Sri Lanka, Auckland
Mar 23-Apr 12: ICC Trophy, Malaysia
Mar 25: Second one-day international, New Zealand v Sri Lanka, Christchurch
Mar 27-Apr 1: Third Test match, West Indies v India, Barbados
Mar 29: Third one-day international, New Zealand v Sri Lanka, Dunedin. First one-day international, South Africa v Australia, East London.
Mar 31: Second one-day international, South Africa v Australia, Port Elizabeth.
Apr 2: Third one-day international, South Africa v Australia, Cape Town
Apr 5: Fourth one-day international, South Africa v Australia, Durban
Apr 8: Fifth one-day international, South Africa v Australia, Johannesburg
Apr 10: Sixth one-day international, South Africa v Australia, Centurion
Apr 11-14: *Fourth Test match, West Indies v India, Antigua*
Apr 13: Seventh one-day international, South Africa v Australia, Bloemfontein
Apr 17-21: Fifth Test match, West Indies v India, Guyana
Apr 26: First one-day international, West Indies v India, Trinidad
Apr 27: Second one-day international, West Indies v India, Trinidad
Apr 30: Third one-day international, West Indies v India, St Vincent
May 3: Fourth one-day international, West Indies v India, Barbados

FIRST-CLASS CRICKET FIXTURES

APRIL

15-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Derbyshire
The Parks: Oxford University v Durham
16-COUNTY MATCH (four days)
Headingley: Yorkshire v Lancashire
18-CHALLENGE MATCH (four days)
* Edgbaston: England A v The Rest
UNIVERSITY MATCHES (three days)
* Fenner's: Cambridge University v Leicestershire
The Parks: Oxford University v Hampshire
23-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Chelmsford: Essex v Hampshire
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Warwickshire
Canterbury: Kent v Derbyshire
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Durham
Leicester: Leicestershire v Gloucestershire
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Worcestershire
The Oval: Surrey v Somerset
Hove: Sussex v Northamptonshire
UNIVERSITY MATCHES (three days)
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Middlesex
The Parks: Oxford University v Yorkshire
26-UNIVERSITY MATCH (one day)
The Parks: British Universities v Yorkshire
27-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Chelmsford: Essex v Hampshire
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Warwickshire
Canterbury: Kent v Derbyshire
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Durham
Leicester: Leicestershire v Gloucestershire
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Worcestershire
The Oval: Surrey v Somerset
Hove: Sussex v Northamptonshire
28-BENSON AND HEDGES CUP
Chelmsford: Essex v Glamorgan
Bristol: Gloucestershire v British Universities
Dublin (Castle Avenue): Ireland v Middlesex
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Yorkshire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Scotland
Lakenham: Minor Counties v Derbyshire
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Durham
The Oval: Surrey v Kent
Hove: Sussex v Hampshire
Worcester: Worcestershire v Warwickshire
30-BENSON AND HEDGES CUP
Fenner's: *British Universities v Sussex*
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Northamptonshire
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Surrey
Canterbury: Kent v Hampshire
Old Trafford: *Lancashire v Derbyshire*
Leicester: Leicestershire v Nottinghamshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Essex
Taunton: Somerset v Glamorgan
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v *Minor Counties*
Headingley: Yorkshire v Worcestershire

MAY

2-BENSON AND HEDGES CUP
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Middlesex
Southampton: Hampshire v Gloucestershire
Canterbury: Kent v Sussex
Trent Bridge: *Nottinghamshire v Northamptonshire*
Forfar: Scotland v Durham
Taunton: Somerset v Ireland
The Oval: Surrey v British Universities
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Lancashire
Worcester: Worcestershire v Minor Counties
4-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Derby: *Derbyshire v Lancashire*
Chelmsford: Essex v Middlesex
Southampton: Hampshire v Yorkshire
Canterbury: Kent v Surrey
Taunton: Somerset v Glamorgan
Hove: Sussex v Nottinghamshire
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Northamptonshire
5-BENSON AND HEDGES CUP
Derby: Derbyshire v Worcestershire
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Leicestershire
Chelmsford: Essex v Somerset
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Ireland
Southampton: Hampshire v Surrey
Canterbury: Kent v British Universities
Walsall: Minor Counties v Lancashire
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Scotland
Hove: Sussex v Gloucestershire
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Yorkshire
7-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Derby: Derbyshire v Surrey
Hartlepool: Durham v Nottinghamshire
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Hampshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Sussex
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Somerset
Worcester: Worcestershire v Leicestershire
Headingley: Yorkshire v Glamorgan
UNIVERSITY MATCHES (three days)
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Essex
The Parks: Oxford University v Warwickshire
11-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Derby: Derbyshire v Surrey
Hartlepool: Durham v Nottinghamshire
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Hampshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Sussex
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Somerset
Worcester: Worcestershire v Leicestershire
Headingley: Yorkshire v Glamorgan
12-BENSON AND HEDGES CUP
The Parks: British Universities v Hampshire
Derby: Derbyshire v Warwickshire
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Kent
Downpatrick: Ireland v Essex
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Worcestershire
Lord's: Middlesex v Somerset
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Leicestershire
Glasgow (Titwood): Scotland v Nottinghamshire
The Oval: Surrey v Sussex
Headingley: Yorkshire v Minor Counties
14-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Chelmsford: Essex v Durham
Southampton: Hampshire v Leicestershire
Canterbury: Kent v Glamorgan
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Nottinghamshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Derbyshire
Taunton: Somerset v Sussex
The Oval: Surrey v Gloucestershire
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Yorkshire
UNIVERSITY MATCHES (three days)
Fenner's: Cambridge University v Northamptonshire
The Parks: Oxford University v Worcestershire
15-TOUR MATCH (one day)
Arundel: Duke of Norfolk's XI v Australians
17-TOUR MATCH (one day)
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Australians
UNIVERSITY MATCH (one day)
Fenner's: Cambridge v Oxford
18-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Chelmsford: Essex v Durham
Southampton: Hampshire v Leicestershire
Canterbury: Kent v Glamorgan
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Nottinghamshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Derbyshire
Taunton: Somerset v Sussex
The Oval: Surrey v Gloucestershire
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Yorkshire
TOUR MATCH (one day)
* Worcester: Worcestershire v Australians
20-TOUR MATCH (one day)
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Australians
21-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Worcestershire
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Hampshire
Gloucester: Gloucestershire v Essex
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Northamptonshire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Surrey
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Derbyshire
Taunton: Somerset v Yorkshire
Horsham: Sussex v Kent
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Middlesex
22-TEXACO TROPHY
HEADINGLEY: ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA
(first one-day international)
24-TEXACO TROPHY
THE OVAL: ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA
(second one-day international)
25-TEXACO TROPHY
LORD'S: ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA
(third one-day international)
AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Worcestershire
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Hampshire
Gloucester: Gloucestershire v Essex
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Northamptonshire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Surrey
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Derbyshire
Taunton: Somerset v Yorkshire
Horsham: Sussex v Kent
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Middlesex
27-BENSON AND HEDGES CUP
Quarter-finals
TETLEY'S CHALLENGE SERIES (three days)
Bristol or Hove: Gloucestershire or Sussex v Australians
(Surrey v Australians if both counties in Benson and Hedges quarter-finals)
29-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Ilford: Essex v Yorkshire
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Durham
Southampton: Hampshire v Warwickshire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Lancashire
Lord's: Middlesex v Northamptonshire
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Kent
Worcester: Worcestershire v Somerset
30-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)
The Parks: Oxford University v Sussex
31-TETLEY'S CHALLENGE SERIES (three days)
* Derby: Derbyshire v Australians

JUNE

1-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Ilford: Essex v Yorkshire
Pontypridd: Glamorgan v Durham
Southampton: Hampshire v Warwickshire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Lancashire
Lord's: Middlesex v Northamptonshire
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Kent
Worcester: Worcestershire v Somerset
4-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Chesterfield: Derbyshire v Hampshire
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Sussex
Tunbridge Wells: Kent v Warwickshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Leicestershire
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Nottinghamshire
Taunton: Somerset v Lancashire
The Oval: Surrey v Essex
Headingley: Yorkshire v Gloucestershire
5-FIRST CORNHILL TEST MATCH
* EDGBASTON: ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA
UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)
The Parks: Oxford University v Glamorgan
8-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Chesterfield: Derbyshire v Hampshire
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Sussex
Tunbridge Wells: Kent v Warwickshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Leicestershire
Milton Keynes (Campbell Park): Northamptonshire v Nottinghamshire
Taunton: Somerset v Lancashire
The Oval: Surrey v Essex
Headingley: Yorkshire v Gloucestershire
9-COSTCUTTER CUP
Harrogate (three days)
10-BENSON AND HEDGES CUP
Semi-finals
11-*TETLEY'S CHALLENGE SERIES* (three days)
Northampton or Trent Bridge: Northamptonshire or Nottinghamshire v Australians
(Durham v Australians if both counties in Benson and Hedges semi-finals)
12-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Middlesex
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Worcestershire
Basingstoke: Hampshire v Somerset
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Kent
The Oval: Surrey v Yorkshire
Hove: Sussex v Essex
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Derbyshire
14-TETLEY'S CHALLENGE SERIES (three days)
* Leicester: Leicestershire v Australians
UNIVERSITY MATCHES (three days)
* *Fenner's: Cambridge University v Durham*
The Parks: Oxford University v Nottinghamshire
15-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Middlesex
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Worcestershire
Basingstoke: Hampshire v Somerset
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Kent
The Oval: Surrey v Yorkshire
Hove: Sussex v Essex
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Derbyshire
18-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Derby: Derbyshire v Sussex
Darlington: Durham v Kent
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Middlesex
Liverpool: Lancashire v Glamorgan
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Hampshire
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Yorkshire
Bath: Somerset v Leicestershire
Worcester: Worcestershire v Surrey
19-SECOND CORNHILL TEST MATCH
* LORD'S: ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA
20-UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)
* Chelmsford: Essex v Oxford University
22-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Derby: *Derbyshire v Sussex*
Darlington: Durham v Kent
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Middlesex
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Glamorgan
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Hampshire
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Yorkshire
Bath: Somerset v Leicestershire
Worcester: Worcestershire v Surrey
24-NATWEST TROPHY, first round
Beaconsfield: Buckinghamshire v Essex
Wisbech: Cambridgeshire v Hampshire
Barrow: Cumberland v Northamptonshire
Exmouth: Devon v Leicestershire
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Bedfordshire
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Scotland
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Berkshire
Lincoln (Lindum): Lincolnshire v Derbyshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Kent
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Staffordshire
Taunton: Somerset v Herefordshire
The Oval: Surrey v Durham
Hove: Sussex v Shropshire
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Norfolk
Worcester: *Worcestershire v Holland*
Headingley: Yorkshire v Ireland
25-TOUR MATCH (three days)
The Parks: Combined Universities v Australians
26-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Southend: Essex v Derbyshire
Swansea: Glamorgan v Sussex
Leicester: Leicestershire v Warwickshire
Luton: Northamptonshire v Gloucestershire
The Oval: Surrey v Nottinghamshire
Worcester: Worcestershire v Lancashire
Headingley: Yorkshire v Middlesex
28-TETLEY'S CHALLENGE SERIES (three days)
* Southampton: Hampshire v Australians
UNIVERSITY MATCHES (three days)
* Canterbury: Kent v Cambridge University
* Taunton: Somerset v Oxford University
29-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Southend: Essex v Derbyshire
Swansea: Glamorgan v Sussex
Leicester: Leicestershire v Warwickshire
Luton: Northamptonshire v Gloucestershire
The Oval: Surrey v Nottinghamshire
Worcester: Worcestershire v Lancashire
Headingley: Yorkshire v Middlesex

JULY

2-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Hampshire
Chelmsford: Essex v Somerset
Swansea: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire
Maidstone: Kent v Northamptonshire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Yorkshire
Uxbridge: Middlesex v Lancashire
Arundel: Sussex v Worcestershire
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Surrey
TOUR MATCH (three days)
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Pakistan A
UNIVERSITY MATCH (three days)
Lord's: Oxford v Cambridge
3-THIRD CORNHILL TEST MATCH
* OLD TRAFFORD: ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA
5-TOUR MATCH (three days)
* Derby: Derbyshire v Pakistan A
6-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Hampshire
Chelmsford: Essex v Somerset
Swansea: Glamorgan v Gloucestershire
Maidstone: Kent v Northamptonshire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Yorkshire
Uxbridge: Middlesex v Lancashire
Arundel: Sussex v Worcestershire
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Surrey
9-NATWEST TROPHY, second round
Marlow or Chelmsford: Buckinghamshire or Essex v Worcestershire or Holland
Wisbech or Southampton: Cambridgeshire or Hampshire v Glamorgan or Bedfordshire
Exmouth or Leicester: Devon or Leicestershire v Yorkshire or Ireland
Lincoln (Lindum) or Derby: Lincolnshire or Derbyshire v Cumberland or Northamptonshire
Uxbridge or Canterbury: Middlesex or Kent v Gloucestershire or Scotland
The Oval or Chester-le-Street: Surrey or Durham v Nottinghamshire or Staffordshire
Hove or St Georges (Telford): Sussex or *Shropshire v Lancashire or Berkshire*
Edgbaston or Lakenham: Warwickshire or Norfolk v Somerset or Herefordshire
TOUR MATCHES
Shenley: MCC v Pakistan A (three days)
Jesmond: Minor Counties v Australians (one day)
12-BENSON AND HEDGES CUP
LORD'S: FINAL
(reserve days July 13 and 14)
TOUR MATCH (one day)
Edinburgh (Grange CC): Scotland v Australians
13-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Warwickshire
Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Somerset
Hove: Sussex v Gloucestershire
(matches involving Benson and Hedges finalists will be played on July 15)
TOUR MATCH (one day)
Walsall: English Cricket Board XI v Pakistan A
16-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Cheltenham: Gloucestershire v Derbyshire
Canterbury: Kent v Leicestershire
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Sussex
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Essex
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Warwickshire
Guildford: Surrey v Hampshire
Scarborough: Yorkshire v Durham
TETLEY'S CHALLENGE SERIES (three days)
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Australians
TOUR MATCH (three days)
Worcester: Worcestershire v Pakistan A
19-TETLEY'S CHALLENGE SERIES (three days)
* Lord's: Middlesex v Australians
TOUR MATCH (three days)
* Taunton: Somerset v Pakistan A
20-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Cheltenham: Gloucestershire v Derbyshire
Canterbury: Kent v Leicestershire
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Sussex
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Essex
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Warwickshire
Guildford: Surrey v Hampshire
Worcester: Worcestershire v Glamorgan
Scarborough: Yorkshire v Durham
22-TOUR MATCH (one day)
Cheltenham: Gloucestershire v Pakistan A
23-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Chesterfield: Derbyshire v Glamorgan
Chelmsford: Essex v Worcestershire
Cheltenham: Gloucestershire v Durham
Southampton: Hampshire v Lancashire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Nottinghamshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Kent
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Surrey
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Somerset
24-FOURTH CORNHILL TEST MATCH
* HEADINGLEY: ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA
TOUR MATCH (four days)
* Hove: Sussex v Pakistan A
27-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Chesterfield: Derbyshire v Glamorgan
Chelmsford: Essex v Worcestershire
Cheltenham: Gloucestershire v Durham
Southampton: Hampshire v Lancashire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Nottinghamshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Kent
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Surrey
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Somerset
29-NATWEST TROPHY, quarter-finals
TOUR MATCH
Cardiff or Southampton: Glamorgan or Hampshire v Pakistan A
(depending on outcome of NatWest second round)
31-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Derbyshire
Colchester: Essex v Leicestershire
Colwyn Bay: Glamorgan v Nottinghamshire
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Sussex
Worcester: Worcestershire v Kent
Headingley: Yorkshire v Northamptonshire
TOUR MATCH (one day)
Swansea: Wales v Pakistan A

AUGUST

1-TETLEY'S CHALLENGE SERIES (four days)
* Taunton: Somerset v Australians
TOUR MATCH (four days)
* Bristol: Gloucestershire v Pakistan A
NATWEST UNDER-19 MATCH
Hove: England v Zimbabwe
(first one-day international)
3-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Derbyshire
Colchester: Essex v Leicestershire
Colwyn Bay: Glamorgan v Nottinghamshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Surrey
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Sussex
Worcester: Worcestershire v Kent
Headingley: Yorkshire v Northamptonshire
4-NATWEST UNDER-19 MATCH
Southampton: England v Zimbabwe
(second one-day international)
6-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Canterbury: Kent v Essex
Blackpool: Lancashire v Warwickshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Hampshire
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Worcestershire
Taunton: Somerset v Gloucestershire
The Oval: Surrey v Durham
Eastbourne: Sussex v Leicestershire
7-FIFTH CORNHILL TEST MATCH
* TRENT BRIDGE: ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA
TOUR MATCH (four days)
* Headingley: Yorkshire v Pakistan A
NATWEST UNDER-19 MATCH (four days)
* Edgbaston: England v Zimbabwe (first Test)
9-*INTERNATIONAL MATCH* (three days)
* Dublin (Malahide): Ireland v Scotland
10-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Canterbury: Kent v Essex
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Warwickshire
Lord's: Middlesex v Hampshire
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Worcestershire
Taunton: Somerset v Gloucestershire
The Oval: Surrey v Durham
Eastbourne: Sussex v Leicestershire
12-NATWEST TROPHY
First semi-final
TOUR MATCH (one day)
Derby or Northampton: Derbyshire or Northamptonshire v Pakistan A
(depending on NatWest Trophy)
13-NATWEST TROPHY
Second semi-final
15-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
* Derby: Derbyshire v Lancashire
* Portsmouth: Hampshire v Yorkshire
* Lord's: Middlesex v Surrey
* Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Somerset
* Hove: Sussex v Gloucestershire
* Worcester: Worcestershire v Glamorgan
TOUR MATCH (four days)
* Chelmsford: First-Class Counties Select XI v Pakistan A
WOMEN'S MATCH
Bristol: England v South Africa
(first one-day international)
16-TETLEY'S CHALLENGE SERIES (three days)
* Canterbury: Kent v Australians
17-WOMEN'S MATCH
* Taunton: England v South Africa
(second one-day international)
18 (or 19)-BAIN HOGG TROPHY (one day)
Semi-finals
20-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Middlesex
Abergavenny: Glamorgan v Northamptonshire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Derbyshire
Worksop: Nottinghamshire v Essex
Taunton: Somerset v Kent
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Worcestershire
Scarborough: Yorkshire v Sussex
WOMEN'S MATCH
Lord's: England v South Africa
(third one-day international)
21-SIXTH CORNHILL TEST MATCH
* THE OVAL: ENGLAND v AUSTRALIA
NATWEST UNDER-19 MATCH (four days)
* Headingley: England v Zimbabwe
(second Test)
24-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Middlesex
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Northamptonshire
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Lancashire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Derbyshire
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Essex
Taunton: Somerset v Kent
Worcester: Worcestershire v Warwickshire
Scarborough: Yorkshire v Sussex
27-*BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP*
Derby: Derbyshire v Somerset
Chelmsford: Essex v Warwickshire
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Nottinghamshire
Portsmouth: Hampshire v Kent
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Yorkshire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Glamorgan
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Durham
Hove: Sussex v Surrey
Kidderminster: Worcestershire v Middlesex
WOMEN'S MATCH
Hinckley: England v South Africa
(fourth one-day international)
28-NATWEST UNDER-19 MATCH (four days)
* Canterbury: England v Zimbabwe (third Test)
30-WOMEN'S MATCH
Milton Keynes (Campbell Park): England v South Africa
(fifth one-day international)
31-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Derby: Derbyshire v Somerset
Chelmsford: Essex v Warwickshire
Bristol: Gloucestershire v Nottinghamshire
Portsmouth: Hampshire v Kent
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Yorkshire
Leicester: Leicestershire v Glamorgan
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Durham
Hove: Sussex v Surrey
Worcester: Worcestershire v Middlesex

SEPTEMBER

2-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Derby: Derbyshire v Northamptonshire
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Warwickshire
Canterbury: Kent v Gloucestershire
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Essex
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Hampshire
Taunton: Somerset v Middlesex
The Oval: Surrey v Glamorgan
Headingley: Yorkshire v Worcestershire
6-NATWEST TROPHY
LORD'S: FINAL
7-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Derby: Derbyshire v Northamptonshire
Canterbury: Kent v Gloucestershire
Old Trafford: Lancashire v Essex
Leicester: Leicestershire v Durham
Trent Bridge: Nottinghamshire v Hampshire
Taunton: Somerset v Middlesex
The Oval: Surrey v Glamorgan
Headingley: Yorkshire v Worcestershire
8-BAIN HOGG TROPHY (one day)
Final
10-BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Somerset
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Essex
Southampton: Hampshire v Sussex
Lord's: Middlesex v Nottinghamshire
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Leicestershire
The Oval: Surrey v Lancashire
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Gloucestershire
Worcester: Worcestershire v Derbyshire
Headingley: Yorkshire v Kent
14-AXA LIFE LEAGUE
Chester-le-Street: Durham v Somerset
Cardiff: Glamorgan v Essex
Southampton: Hampshire v Sussex
Lord's: Middlesex v Nottinghamshire
Northampton: Northamptonshire v Leicestershire
The Oval: Surrey v Lancashire
Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Gloucestershire
Worcester: Worcestershire v Derbyshire
Headingley: Yorkshire v Kent
18-*BRITANNIC ASSURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP*
* Derby: Derbyshire v Yorkshire
* Chelmsford: Essex v Middlesex
* Bristol: Gloucestershire v Lancashire
* Southampton: Hampshire v Worcestershire
* Canterbury: Kent v Surrey
* Leicester: Leicestershire v Durham
* Taunton: Somerset v Glamorgan
* Hove: Sussex v Nottinghamshire
* Edgbaston: Warwickshire v Northamptonshire

* match includes Sunday play

Other matches at Lord's

May 4-5: MCC v Wales
June 27: Eton v Harrow
July 15: MCC v MCC Schools
July 16: MCC Schools v National Association of Young Cricketers
July 17: NCA Young Cricketers v Combined Services
Aug 21-22: MCC v Ireland
Aug 27: MCC Trophy (Minor Counties) final
Aug 29: Abbot Ale club championship final
Aug 31: Alliance & Leicester Giro Village championship final

The Times calendar of sport 1997

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

Jan 4-5: NFL divisional play-off games
Jan 12: AFC and NFC championship games
Jan 26: Super Bowl XXXI, New Orleans
Apr 12: WLAF season begins.
June 21-22: World Bowl 97
Aug 31: new NFL season begins

ARCHERY

Mar 16: National indoor championships, Aylesbury
May 24-25: All-British field championships, Burith Wells
June 7-8: UK Masters, Lilleshall
Aug 9-10: British target championships, Lilleshall
Dec 7: Junior national indoor championships, Ryton

ATHLETICS

Jan 4: World Cross Challenge, Belfast.
Jan 11: Reebok UK CAU cross-country championships, Luton
Jan 12: World Cross Challenge, Amorebieta, Spain
Jan 19: World Cross Challenge, Seville
Jan 25-26: AAA indoor championships, Birmingham.
Feb 1: World Cross Challenge, Tourcoing, France, British Universities championships, Leeds
Feb 7: Millrose Games, New York.
Feb 9: World Cross Challenge, Albufeira, Portugal
Feb 15: Northern Ireland cross-country championships, Lurgan, Reebok English cross-country relay championships, Mansfield.
Feb 16: Ricoh indoor tour, Lievin, France, World Cross Challenge Chiba Japan; Scottish cross-country championships, Perth
Feb 20: Ricoh indoor tour, Stockholm' Grand prix II, Melbourne
Feb 22: World Cross Challenge, Nairobi.
Feb 23: Ricoh indoor tour, Birmingham; World Cross Challenge, Diekirch, Luxembourg
Feb 28-Mar 1: United States indoor championships, Atlanta.
Feb 28-Mar 2: European veterans' indoor championships, Birmingham
Mar 1: English Schools cross-country championships, Newark.
Mar 2: Great Britain world cross-country championships trials, Northumberland
Mar 7-9: World indoor championships, Paris
Mar 8: Reebok English national cross-country championships, Havant, Scottish Schools cross-country championships, Irvine; Welsh Schools cross-country championships, Llandiloes
Mar 9: World Cross Challenge, San Vittore, Italy
Mar 17: Grand prix II, Johannesburg.
Mar 22: TSB Schools and under-20 cross country international, Chepstow, British veterans' cross-country championships, Sunderland.
Mar 23: World cross-country championships, Turin
Mar 26: British police cross-country championships, Manchester
Apr 6: Paris Marathon
Apr 13: Flora London Marathon
Apr 19-20: World Racewalking Cup, Prague
Apr 20: Rotterdam Marathon.
Apr 21: Boston Marathon.
May 4: Brazil Grand Prix, Rio de Janeiro
May 10: Osaka Grand Prix, Osaka, Japan
May 18: US Track and Field Grand Prix, Charlotte, North Carolina
May 25: Prefontaine Classic, Eugene, Oregon
May 29: Grand prix II, Seville
May 30: Diputacion Grand Prix, Seville
May 31: Grand prix II, San Jose, Grand prix II, Hengelo, Michael Johnson v Donovan Bailey Challenge, Toronto
June 2: Grand prix II, St Denis, France
June 5: Golden Gala, Rome
June 8: Znamensky Memorial, Moscow
June 10: Grand prix II, Bratislava
June 12-15: United States world championships trials, Indianapolis
June 15: Grand prix II, Gateshead
June 18: Grand prix II, Helsinki
June 21-22: European Cup, Munich.
June 25: Gaz de France Grand Prix, Paris
June 29: Grand Prix I, London
July 2: Athletissima 97, Lausanne, Switzerland
July 4: Bislett Games, Oslo
July 7: DN Galan, Stockholm
July 9: Grand prix II, Linz, Austria
July 10-13: European under-23 Cup, Turku, Finland
July 11-13: English Schools championships, Sheffield
July 12-14: Great Britain world championships trials, Birmingham
July 16: Nikaia, Nice, France
July 24-27: European junior championships, Ljubljana, Slovenia.
Aug 1-10: World championships, Athens.
Aug 13: Zurich Weltklasse, Zurich
Aug 16: Hercules 97, Monte Carlo
Aug 22: Van Damme Memorial, Brussels
Aug 24: Cologne Weltklasse, Cologne
Aug 26 or Sept 5: ISTAF 97, Berlin
Sept 3: Grand prix II, Rieti
Sept 13: IAAF Grand Prix final, Fukuoka, Japan
Sept 28: Berlin Marathon
Oct 4: Hall marathon world championships, Kosice
Nov 2: New York City Marathon
Dec 14: European cross-country championships, Oeiras, Portugal

BADMINTON

Jan 31-Feb 2: National championships, Norwich.
Feb 8-9: National under-16 championships, Telford
Feb 21-23: Friends Provident grand slam tournament, Mansfield
Feb 28-Mar 2: National under-18 championships, Bletchley
Mar 10-15: Yonex All England open championships Birmingham
Mar 27-30: European veterans championships, Gateshead
Mar 30-Apr 6: European junior championships, Nymburk, Czech Republic
Apr 18-20: Friends Provident grand slam tournament, Redbridge
May 20-June 1: World championships, Glasgow

BALLROOM DANCING

Jan 6: The Star Ball, London
Jan 21-23: UK Open Championships, Bournemouth.
May 23-30: British Open Championships, Blackpool
July 11-13: UK Closed Championships, Bournemouth
Sept 20: World Professional Latin Championship, Germany
Oct 4: World Amateur Latin Championship, Gothenburg
Oct 7-9: International Championships, Brentwood and London
Nov 8: World Amateur Modern Championship, Karlsruhe, Germany
Nov 20-23: National championships, Blackpool
Nov 24: World Professional Modern Championship, Blackpool

BASEBALL

Apr 1: Opening day of Major League season.
July 8: All-Star game.

BASKETBALL

Jan 19: Men's and women's National Cup finals, Sheffield

Ancient city must be worthy of modern times

Athens knows that much rides on the success of the world championships, says David Powell

Ignoring the Virgilian maxim about Greeks bearing gifts, the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) has put its trust in Athens to stage the 1997 world athletics championships. The world governing body has good reason to expect that the gift from its host, which is waiving the traditional $7 million IAAF grant, ought not to shatter into tiny pieces.

After the organisational catastrophe of the Olympic Games in Atlanta, Athens must impress in the staging of the sixth world championships if it has to have a chance of winning the vote to host the 2004 Olympics. The decision will be taken only three weeks after the biggest sports event of the year has drawn to a close in the Greek capital. Athens, where the first modern Olympics were held in 1896, felt that the centennial Games should have gone there, but acknowledges now that it relied too much on history and that, to succeed this time, it must meet modern-day demands.

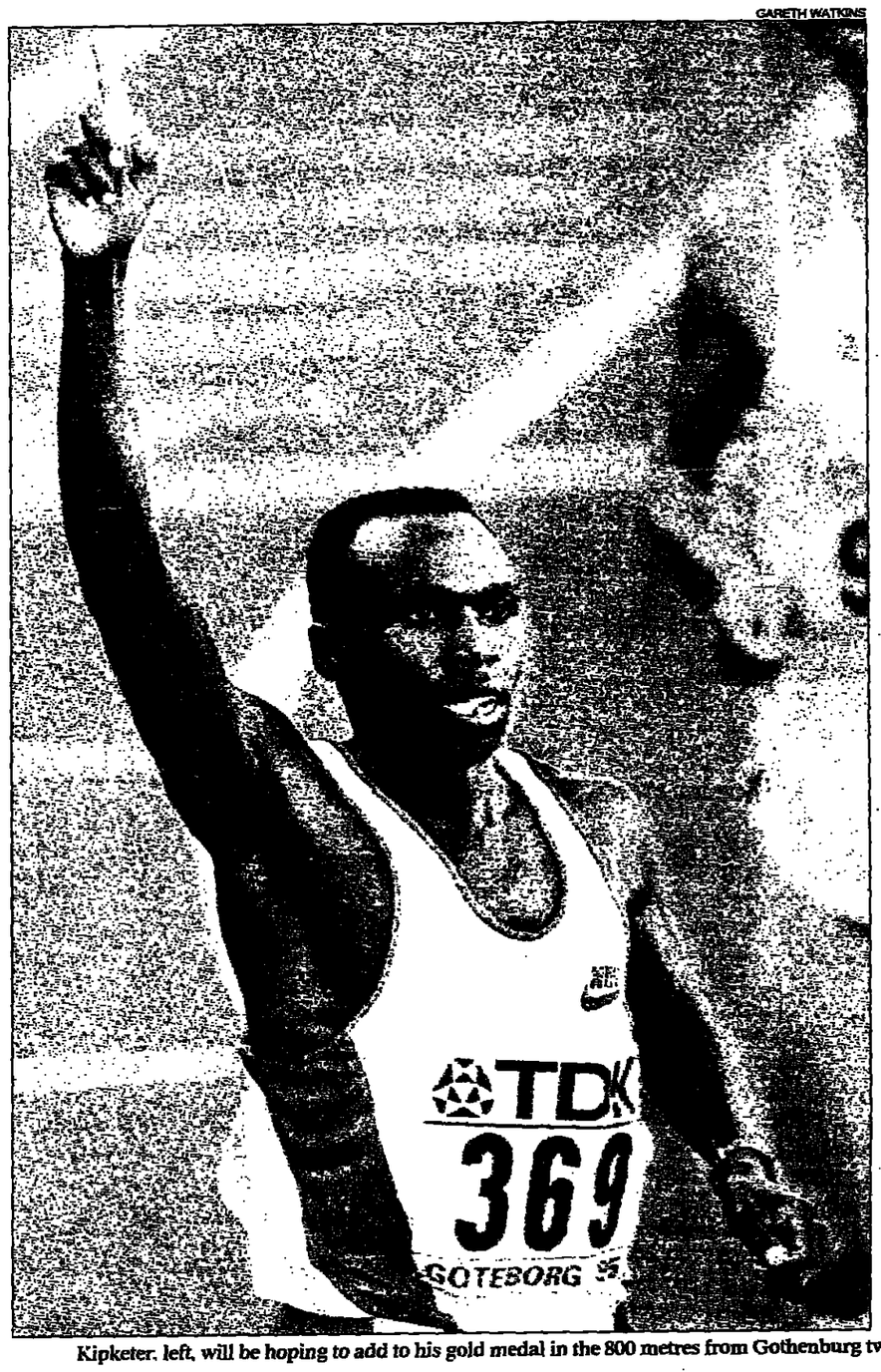
"You can imagine what a promotion this might be for the Greek Olympic bid if they have a problem-free world championships," Istvan Gyulai, the IAAF secretary, said. Improving on the Atlanta efficiency standard might be about as demanding as asking Michael Johnson to beat the Tenterden Trotters club 200 metres record, but proving as good an athletics meeting will be more difficult.

Atlanta witnessed arguably the greatest track and field show in Olympic history: Johnson's never-to-be-forgotten world record and 200/400 metres double; Donovan Bailey's 100 metres world record; the majesty of Marie-José Pérec in the 200 and 400 metres; the sovereignty of Svetlana Masterkova in the 800 and 1,500 metres; a fourth long jump gold medal for Carl Lewis; a profusion of close finishes; the drama of Linford Christie's protest at his disqualification in the 100 metres, and of Hicham el Guerrouj's fall in the 1,500 metres.

Yet, even as Atlanta unfolded, fresh buds were beginning to bloom. One, Daniel Komen, surely will flower in Athens. Komen, 20, narrowly failed to make the Kenya team for Atlanta, but, inspired by watching the Olympics on television, within five weeks he set one of the most extraordinary world records and won the overall men's grand prix title.

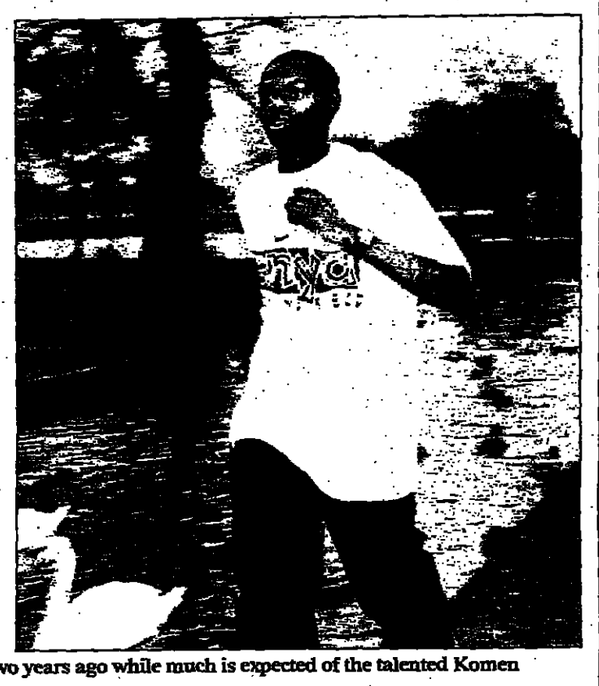
Komen took 4.44sec off Noureddine Morceli's 3,000 metres world record. His ambition for 1997 is to win in Athens. "I am the 3,000 metres world record-holder but without having any world championships or Olympic gold medal," Komen said. "I am training for the world championships."

GARETH WATKINS



Kipketer, left, will be hoping to add to his gold medal in the 800 metres from Gothenburg two years ago while much is expected of the talented Komen

Action from the Olympic marathon of 1896, the last time that Greece hosted a global athletics championship



One flower denied a vase in Atlanta was Wilson Kipketer, the world's best 800 metres runner who, as a Kenyan-born Dane, was not eligible for the Olympics, although he had won the world title in Gothenburg two years ago. So, with Komen and Kipketer added to the parade of Olympic champions in Athens, we may find championship records being smashed like plates in a Greek restaurant.

Prize-money will be paid for the first time, cash replacing cars, which have been awarded to winners at the past two world championships. Some $5 million is in the pot, winners receiving $60,000, runners-up $30,000 and bronze medal-winners $20,000. A bonus, probably $100,000, will be paid to any athlete setting a world record.

There will be no new events in Athens, with the women's pole vault and hammer scheduled to join the programme in 1999. "The principle is that we want to have a rehearsal at continental level first," Gyulai said. "In Budapest [at the 1998 European championships], they will have both and we will have both in 1999."

Only half of full prize-money will be paid the first time these events are held, increasing to 75 per cent the second time and 100 per cent in 2003. "We do not want to pay for a less valuable performance," Gyulai said, noting that it takes time for new events to be fully competitive.

The IAAF has two concerns. "The biggest problem for Athens is going to be the pollution and traffic," Gyulai said. "Traffic is worse than in the rush hour in London." A world championships traffic lane is to be set aside while the IAAF hopes that pollution will be reduced because the occasion coincides with a holiday period.

In October, reports from Athens indicated a dispute between the Greek Government and the Greek athletics federation (Segas), which threatened the smooth running of the championships. Segas, which had signed a contract with the IAAF to run the championships, withdrew, saying that it had been marginalised by the state.

However, Andreas Fouras, the Greek Minister for Sport, Stratos Molivas, the president of Segas, and Primo Nebiolo, the IAAF president, met in November, after which it was announced that "a final agreement was reached ... settling any previous controversies". Greece must hope for a controversy-free championships. Its future Olympic bid depends upon it.

Jan 29: European Championship, semi-final round, England v Portugal, Newcastle
Feb 9: NBA All-Star game, Gund Arena, Cleveland
Feb 26: European Championship, semi-final round, England v Russia
Mar 2: TUP Trophy final, Birmingham
Mar 26: European Korac Cup final, first leg, European Ronchetti Cup final, first leg.
Apr 4: European Korac Cup final, second leg, European Ronchetti Cup final, second leg
Apr 24: NBA play-offs begin.
May 3-4: Budweiser Championship finals, Wembley
June 6-15: European women's Championship finals, Budapest.
June 24-July 6: European Championship finals, Spain
Sept 13-14: new season begins
Oct 16-18: McDonalds championships, vtbc.
Nov 7: NBA season begins

BILLIARDS

Jan 19-23: Open championships, Hyderabad
Feb 27-Mar 7: British open, vtba.
Mar 17-22: Indian open, Madras.
May 16-19: European open, Malta

BOBSLEIGHING

Jan 12-19: European Championships, Konigssee, Germany
Jan 20-Feb 2: World championships, St Moritz.
Feb 9-16: Junior world championships, Altenberg, Germany
Feb 11-16: World Cup (sixth round), Calgary
Feb 19-26: World Cup (seventh round), Nagano, Japan
Nov 4-9: World Cup (first round), Calgary
Nov 25-30: World Cup (second round), Winterberg, Germany
Dec 2-7: World Cup (third round), Cortina, Italy
Dec 9-14: World Cup (fourth round), La Plagne

BOWLS

Jan 12: Under-25 international match, Wales v England, Ammanford
Jan 14-17: CIS Welsh Masters and Welsh men's singles championship, Llanelli
Jan 18: Liberty Trophy quarter-finals.
Jan 20-Feb 2: World singles and pairs championship, Preston
Feb 8: Liberty Trophy semi-finals.
Feb 8-9: English men's Under-25 singles finals, Nottingham
Feb 13: Welsh women's national championship finals Bridgend
Feb 28-Mar 8: English women's national championships, York.
Mar 1-2: Denny Cup finals, Darlington
Mar 8: Yetton Trophy finals, New Earswick, York.
Mar 10-14: Men's British Isles indoor championships and international series, Ballymoney.
Mar 17-20: Women's British Isles indoor championships and international series, Perth.
Mar 21-23: English men's champion of champions singles, Bembridge
Mar 23: Egham Trophy finals Chertwood
Apr 5-12: EIBA championships Melton Mowbray
Apr 13: Liberty Trophy final, Melton Mowbray; Welsh men's national championships, finals, Prestatyn
Apr 18-20: British Steel women's world indoor singles championships, Llanelli
June 20-23: Women's British Isles outdoor championships and international series, Ayr
June 30-July 4: Men's British Isles outdoor championships and international series, Worthing
July 20-21: Women's junior internationals, Portrush
Aug 4: Johns Trophy, finals, Leamington Spa
Aug 5: Walker Cup, finals, Leamington Spa
Aug 6-16: English women's national championships, Leamington Spa
Aug 17: National junior singles championship, Worthing
Aug 17-29: EBA national championships, Worthing
Aug 17-Sept 2: Women's Atlantic Rim Games, Llandrindod Wells
Aug 30: Middleton Cup finals, Worthing
Aug 31: English men's inter-club double rink championships and Under-25 singles, Worthing
Sept 13-14: Men's junior internationals, Llandrindod Wells
Sept 16-17: National mixed fours competition.
Sept 20-21: National mixed pairs competition
Sept 22-28: International open singles, Preston

BOXING

Feb 3: England Under-19 v United States, London
Feb 17-18: ABA championships, semi-finals
Mar 5: ABA championships, finals, Birmingham
Apr 12: ABA junior championships, finals, Birmingham
May 30-June 9: European junior championships, Birmingham

CANOEING

May 2-4: Olympic Regatta, Hazewinkel
July 19-23: World junior flatwater championships, Lahti, Finland
Aug 19-24: World flatwater championships, Dartmouth, Canada.
Aug 30-31: Marathon racing World Cup, Copenhagen
Sept 22-28: World slalom championships, Tres Coroas, Brazil; European flatwater championships, Plovdiv, Bulgaria; European whitewater championships, Tarentaise, France
Dec 5-7: Pan-American championships, Cascavel, Brazil

CRESTA RUN

Jan 18-19: Curzon Cup
Jan 19: Hanes Carter Silver Chip
Feb 1: Morgan Cup.
Feb 8-9: Brabazon Trophy
Feb 15: Grand National
Feb 21-22: Carter Challenge Trophy.
Mar 2: Run closes.

CROQUET

May 24-27: Inter-counties championship, Southwick and Compton
June 7-8: Home internationals, Southport.
June 9-15: Men's and women's championships, Cheltenham
July 6-13: Open championship, Hurlingham.
July 9-11: Junior championships, Bristol.
Sept 4-7: President's Cup, Nottingham, Chairman's Salver, Compton
Sept 27-28: Croquet Association finals, Cheltenham

CURLING

Feb 16: English and Welsh championships
Mar 4-9: Scottish championships, Perth
Mar 30: World junior championships, Japan.
Mar 20-Apr 20: World championships, Berne

CYCLING

Jan 12: National cyclo-cross championships, Birmingham
Feb 1-2: World cyclo-cross championships, Munich
Mar 16: Essex grand prix, Halstead
Mar 22: Advance Plugs circuit race, Eastway Stratford
Mar 28: International track meeting, Herne Hill, London
Mar 29-31: Girvan stage race.
Apr 6: Archer grand prix, Beaconsfield
Apr 13: Paris-Roubaix
Apr 20: Welwyn-Hatfield grand prix, Welwyn
Apr 26-27: Lands Classic, Hull
May 2-5: Tour of Lancashire
May 5: Women's CRA road championship, Bedford.
May 11: Lincoln grand prix; National ten miles time-trial championship, Barton-on-Humber
May 17-June 8: Tour of Italy.
May 24-25: Tour of the Kingdom, Fife
June 1: National 25 miles time-trial championship, Crathorne Division road championships
June 7: National motor-paced championship Herne Hill, London.
June 8: Five Valleys road race, Port Talbot.
June 15: Demaglass Tom Simpson road race, Harworth
June 20: Manx international road race Douglas; Women's national road race championship, Douglas
June 22: Espoirs national road race championship, Cwmcarn; National 50 miles time-trial championship, Pease Pottage.
June 29: Open road race championship, Abergavenny; National tandem sprint championship, Scunthorpe
July 5-27: Tour de France
July 12-13: Aberdeenshire Classic, Aberdeen.
July 13: Men's and women's national 100km team time-trial championship, Exeter
July 18-26: National track championships, Manchester.
July 20: National 100 miles time-trial championship, Didcot.
July 26-27: Men's and women's 24 hours time-trial championship, Wrexham.
July 31-Aug 4: World junior track championships, Cape Town
Aug 3: Tour of the Cotswolds, Gloucester.
Aug 10: Arun Cycles grand prix, Portsmouth
Aug 16: National Omnium track championship, Edinburgh.
Aug 17: Leeds International classic, National men's and women's 12-hour time-trial championship, Garstang.
Aug 24: National circuit championship, Bury St Edmunds
Aug 27-31: World track championships, Perth, Australia.
Sept 6-28: Tour of Spain.
Sept 7: Tunstall Wheelers grand prix, Eccleshall
Sept 21: Tour of the Peak, Derbyshire.
Sept 28: BCF National time-trial championship, Ripon
Oct 8-9: World time-trial championships, San Sebastian.
Oct 11-12: World road race championships, San Sebastian
Oct 26: National hill climb championship, Rowsley, Bar
Nov 8: International track competition, Manchester

DARTS

Jan 4-12: Embassy world championships, Frimley Green
Sept 13-14: World masters, vtba.
Oct 2-4: World team championships, Perth, Australia
Dec 5-6: World masters, vtba.

DISABLED SPORT

Apr 13: London wheelchair marathon
May 2-5: National wheelchair tennis championships, Sheffield.
June 18-29: European wheelchair basketball championships, Madrid.
July 18-28: CP-ISRA world games, Nottingham.
July 19-20: Welsh Games, Cardiff.
July 21-26: British open wheelchair tennis, Nottingham
July 22-Aug 2: World wheelchair games, Stoke Mandeville.
July 28-Aug 3: World cup team tennis tournament, Nottingham.
Aug 10-16: European table tennis championships, Stockholm
Sept 7-14: European swimming championships, Badajoz, Spain.
Sept 16-21: National basketball tournament, Stoke Mandeville.
Sept 19-21: European wheelchair dancing championships, Hanosand, Sweden.
Sept 24-28: National junior games, Hull.
Oct 1-2: European powerlifting championships, Piestany, Slovakia.

DIVING

Mar 13-16: Grand prix, Moscow.
Apr 11-13: European Cup, Belluno, Italy.
June 6-8: National summer championships, Sheffield.
July 31-Aug 3: European junior championships, Glasgow.
Aug 13-24: European championships, Seville.
Sept 10-14: World Cup, Mexico City.
Nov 7-9: National winter championships, Sheffield

EQUESTRIANISM

May 8-11: Badminton Horse Trials.
May 14-18: Windsor Horse Show.
May 29-June 1: Hickstead.
June 12-16: Bramham Horse Trials.
July 10-13: Royal International Horse Show, Hickstead
Aug 14-17: Hickstead Derby.
Sept 4-7: Blenheim three-day event.
Sept 11-14: Burghley Horse Trials.
Sept 24-28: Horse of the Year Show, Wembley
Dec 18-22: Olympia Christmas Show, Wembley.

FENCING

Jan 25: British youth championships (foil); Corble Cup
Feb 8: British youth championships (sabre and épée)
Mar 11-13: Public schools championships
Mar 18: British sabre championships.
Mar 25-31: World junior and cadet championships, Tenerife.
Apr 26: British intermediate foil championships.
May 10: British foil championships.
May 24: British men's épée open.
July 12-19: World championships, Cape Town.

FISHING

Apr 27-May 4: World boat sea championships, Nieuwpoort, Belgium
May 16-18: Home International boat sea championships, Scrabster, Scotland.
June 3-7: Spring home fly international, Bewl Water.
June 7-8: NFSA club boat sea championships, Littlehampton.
June 9-10: Embassy Challenge course final, Denmark.
June 18-20: Women's home fly international, Lough Melvin.
June 28-29: World coarse championships, Hungary.
July 5: Fifth division national coarse championships, Basingstoke
July 14-20: Benson and Hedges Scotland fly final, Loch Leven.
July 19: Fourth division national coarse championships, Middle Trent.
July 24-26: Benson and Hedges England fly final, Rutland Water.
Aug 9: Women's national coarse championships, Willow Park.
Aug 16: First division national coarse championships, Stainforth-Keadby Canal.
Aug 25-31: World junior beach sea championships, Dieppe.
Sept 2-9: World fly championships, Snake River, United States
Sept 6: Third division national coarse championships, Shropshire Canal.
Sept 9-10: Benson and Hedges international fly final, Rutland Water.
Sept 20: Second division national coarse championships, Cambridge and Great Ouse.
Sept 26-28: Home international shore sea championships, Aberaeron, Wales.
Oct 11-19: World shore sea championships, Dover.
Dec: World big game championships, Kenya (tbc).

FOOTBALL

Jan 4: FA Cup, third round.
Jan 17-22: US Cup (between United States, Mexico, Peru and Denmark), Pasadena and San Diego.
Jan 22: International match, Italy v Northern Ireland, Palermo.
Jan 25: FA Cup, fourth round.
Feb 11: World Cup qualifying, European zone, group 4, Estonia v Scotland, in Monaco.
Feb 12: World Cup qualifying, European zone, group 2, England v Italy, Wembley.
Feb 15: FA Cup, fifth round.
Feb 19: Coca-Cola Cup, semi-finals, first legs.
Mar 8: FA Cup, quarter-finals
Mar 12: Coca-Cola Cup, semi-finals, second legs.
Mar 29: World Cup qualifying, European zone, group four, Scotland v Estonia, Hampden Park; Group seven, Wales v Belgium, Cardiff; Group nine, Northern Ireland v Portugal, Belfast.
Apr 2: World Cup qualifying, European zone, group four, Scotland v Austria, Hampden Park; Group eight, Macedonia v Ireland; Group nine, Ukraine v Northern Ireland.
Apr 6: Coca-Cola Cup, final, Wembley
Apr 12: Tennents Scottish Cup, semi-finals.
Apr 13: FA Cup, semi-finals.
Apr 20: Auto Windscreens Shield, final, Wembley.
Apr 30: World Cup qualifying, European zone, group two, England v Georgia, Wembley; group four, Sweden v Scotland; group eight, Romania v Ireland; group nine, Armenia v Northern Ireland.

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The Times calendar of sport 1997

Valderrama ready to stage golden Ryder Cup

John Hopkins on the history behind the course hosting golf's premier event

In September the eyes of golfers will turn towards southwest Spain, to Valderrama, one of two golf courses on the Sotogrande estate a few miles east of the Rock of Gibraltar.

The course is well known. Sotogrande is the home of many expatriates and has the first golf course in Europe to be designed by Robert Trent Jones. In addition, Valderrama has hosted the Volvo Masters for the past eight years. It will be under scrutiny in eight months' time because it is staging the Ryder Cup.

The story of Valderrama began more than 30 years ago when Alfredo Melian criss-crossed southern Spain on a motorbike searching for land near an airport with enough space for its own landing strip and water supply.

Melian's search was being conducted on behalf of Colonel Joseph McMicking, an American of Scottish descent, who had lived in the Philippines where his grandfather built the municipal system and, later, McMicking himself would build a satellite city.

McMicking liked to say: "I am Scotch — with lots of water." After starting an electrical firm with 27 employees and seeing it develop into an industrial giant, he began to think of building a resort in southern Spain.

At last Melian found what he was looking for — five farms, known as Sotogrande, in the middle of a tract of land 19 kilometres from Gibraltar airport with a frontage to the Mediterranean and a water supply — and McMicking and some friends purchased it. "We bought the land at Sotogrande without having seen it, like a pig in a poke," McMicking said. "We paid $750,000 and had to pay another one-third in six months and the rest in a year. We took a three-quarters of a million dollars gamble but we were OK. We finally managed it."

Soon bulldozers were brought in to thin out the cork trees. Trent Jones was recruited to design a golf course, Sotogrande Old, which cost $500,000 and was the first course in Europe to have automatic sprinklers — 472 of them serviced by 100 miles of underground cable.

There was a comfortable hotel with guest cottages, and tennis, croquet, polo and beach clubs, as well as a riding club at one of the original farms. Masterminded by a formidable lady, who had previously turned the Ritz Hotel in Madrid into a world-class hotel, the resort quickly became established.

And there Sotogrande might have stayed had it not been for the entry of Jaime Ortiz Patiño, a grandson of Simon Patiño, the fabulously wealthy Bolivian tin magnate. In 1975 another course, known as Las Aves, also designed by Trent Jones, opened at Sotogrande on land to the north of the Old course.

As the Old course became busier, Patiño found himself playing more golf at Las Aves and when that came up for sale he rounded up some friends and they bought it. That did not last long. "Jimmy likes to chair committees of odd numbers and he thinks three is too many," a friend said. In 1986 Patiño bought out his friends and renamed the course Valderrama.

Valderrama has become as much of an obsession to Patiño as Xanadu was to Charles Foster Kane. Only Augusta National Golf Club in Georgia, site of the US Masters, receives as much attention as Valderrama. There is informed speculation that Patiño spends several million pounds of his own money on the course annually and if that is inaccurate it is because it is too little.

He reassured members querying the expense of a tunnel under the driving range by saying: "Don't worry. This may be a tunnel but it's not like the Channel Tunnel. There is no shortage of money here."

Patiño sold his collection of Impressionist paintings for nearly £40 million a few years ago. He talks of having one golden rule: "I have the gold, I make the rule." He has a Ming vase in the hall of one of his houses, two 18th century silver thrones made for the royal palace in Berlin in a bedroom and cutlery that once belonged to Catherine the Great on his dinner table.

'It is suggested Patiño spends several million pounds on the course annually'

In his pursuit of excellence he has learned as much about grass and greens as anyone in Europe. No other European sits on the greens committee of the US Golf Association. "It is a big challenge to watch grass grow in the right way. I can win that battle. I cannot hit the ball and get it into the hole but I bloody well can get the poa grass out of the green."

This September we will see how well he has succeeded.

THE WORLD OF GOLF IN 1997

September 26-28: Valderrama, Spain

April 10-13: US Masters, Augusta

June 12-15: US Open, Congressional, Bethesda, Maryland

July 17-20: Open Championship, Royal Troon

August 14-17: US PGA Championship, Winged Foot, New York

EUROPEAN TOUR

Jan 23-26: Johnnie Walker Classic, Hope Island, Queensland, Australia
Jan 30-Feb 2: Heineken Classic, The Vines, Perth, Australia
Feb 6-9: South African Open, Johannesburg
Feb 13-16: Dimension Data, Sun City, South Africa
Feb 20-23: Alfred Dunhill South African PGA championship, Houghton, Johannesburg
Feb 27-Mar 2: Dubai Desert Classic, Emirates Club, Dubai
Mar 6-9: Moroccan Open, Rabat
Mar 13-16: Portuguese Open, Lisbon
Mar 20-23: Turespaña Masters, Maspalomas
Mar 27-30: Madeira Island Open
Apr 3-6: To be announced
Apr 17-20: To be announced
Apr 24-27: Peugeot Spanish Open
May 1-4: Conte of Florence Italian Open
May 8-11: Benson and Hedges International Open, The Oxfordshire, Thame
May 15-18: Alamo English Open
May 23-26: Volvo PGA championship, Wentworth
May 29-Jun 1: Deutsche Bank Open-TPC of Europe
Jun 5-8: Slaley Hall Northumberland Challenge, Slaley Hall, Hexham
Jun 12-15: To be announced
Jun 19-22: Volvo German Open
Jun 26-29: Peugeot French Open, Paris
Jul 3-6: Murphy's Irish Open, Druids Glen, County Wicklow
Jul 10-12: Loch Lomond World Invitational, Loch Lomond
Jul 24-27: Sun Dutch Open
Jul 31-Aug 3: Volvo Scandinavian Masters
Aug 7-10: Chemapol Trophy Czech Open
Aug 14-17: To be announced
Aug 21-24: Smurfit European Open, K Club, Dublin
Aug 28-31: BMW International Open
Sept 4-7: Canon European Masters, Crans-sur-Sierre, Switzerland
Sept 11-14: Lancôme Trophy, St Nom-la-Bretèche, Paris
Sept 18-21: One 2 One British Masters
Oct 2-5: Linde German Masters
Oct 9-12: * Toyota World Match Play championship, Wentworth
Oct 16-19: * Alfred Dunhill Cup, St Andrews
Oct 23-26: Oki Pro-Am
Oct 30-Nov 2: Volvo Masters, Montecastillo, Spain
Nov 6-9: * Sarazen World Open, Chateau Elan, Atlanta
Nov 20-23: * World Cup of Golf, Kiawah Island, South Carolina

To be scheduled: Air France Cannes Open, Open Novotel Perrier; Catalan Open; Austrian Open
* approved special event

Continued from page 26

May 3: final day of Nationwide League.
May 4: UK Living Women's FA Cup, final.
May 7: Uefa Cup, final, first leg.
May 10: final day of FA Carling Premiership; FA Carlsberg Vase, final, Wembley; final day of Bell's Scottish League.
May 11: Nationwide League divisional play-offs, semi-finals, first legs.
May 14: Nationwide League divisional play-offs, semi-finals, second legs; European Cup Winners' Cup, final, Rotterdam.
May 17: FA Cup, final, Wembley.
May 18: FA Umbro Trophy, final, Wembley.
May 21: Uefa Cup, final, second leg.
May 24: Nationwide League third division play-offs, final, Wembley; Tennents Scottish Cup, final.
May 25: Nationwide League second division play-offs, final, Wembley.
May 26: Nationwide League first division play-offs, final, Wembley.
May 28: European Cup, final, Olympic Stadium, Munich
May 31: World Cup qualifying, European zone, group two, Poland v England.
June 3: Four-team tournament, France v Brazil, Lyons.
June 4: Four-team tournament, Italy v England, Nantes.
June 7: Four-team tournament, France v England, Montpellier; World Cup qualifying, European zone, group eight, Ireland v Liechtenstein, Dublin.
June 8: Four-team tournament, Italy v Brazil, Lyons; World Cup qualifying, European zone, group four, Belarus v Scotland.
June 10: Four-team tournament, England v Brazil, Lens.
June 11: Four-team tournament, France v Italy, Parc des Princes, Paris.
Aug 9: start of FA Carling Premiership 1997-98; start of Nationwide League 1997-98.
Aug 13: European Cup Champions' League, preliminary round, first legs; Uefa Cup preliminary round, first legs.
Aug 20: World Cup qualifying, European zone, group seven, Turkey v Wales; Group eight, Ireland v Lithuania; Group nine, Northern Ireland v Germany.
Aug 27: European Cup Champions' League, preliminary round, second legs; Uefa Cup preliminary round, second legs.
Sept 6: World Cup qualifying, European zone, group four, Scotland v Belarus, Hampden Park; Group eight, Iceland v Ireland.
Sept 10: World Cup qualifying, European zone, group two, England v Moldova, Wembley; Group eight, Lithuania v Ireland; Group nine, Albania v Northern Ireland.
Sept 17: European Cup Winners' Cup, first round, first legs; Uefa Cup, first round, first legs. First round of group matches of European Cup Champions' League.
Oct 1: European Cup Winners' Cup, first round, second legs; Uefa Cup, first round, second legs.
Oct 11: World Cup qualifying, European zone, group four, Scotland v Latvia, Hampden Park. Group eight, Ireland v Romania, Dublin; Group nine, Portugal v Northern Ireland
Nov 11: World Cup qualifying, European zone, group two, Italy v England; Group seven, Belgium v Wales

GLIDING

May 17-25: British overseas national championships, Le Blanc, France
June 7-15: 15m class British national championships, Syerston.
June 30-July 12: World championships, St Auban, France.
July 5-13: Open class British national championships, Enstone.
July 26-Aug 3: 18m class British championship, Tibenham; Club class championship, Husbands Bosworth.
Aug 8-22: European junior championships, Musbach, Germany.
Aug 9-17: Standard class British national championships, Lasham.
Aug 25-Sept 1: British national junior championships, Bidford

GOLF

Men

Jan 23-26: Johnnie Walker Classic, Hope Island, Queensland.
Jan 30-Feb 2: Heineken Classic, The Vines, Perth, Australia.
Feb 6-9: South African Open, Glendower Country Club, Johannesburg.
Feb 13-16: Dimension Data, Sun City, South Africa.
Feb 20-23: Alfred Dunhill South African PGA championship, Houghton, Johannesburg.
Feb 27-Mar 2: Dubai Desert Classic, Emirates Club.
Mar 6-9: Moroccan Open, Royal Dar es Salam, Rabat.
Mar 13-16: Portuguese Open, Aroeira, Lisbon.
Mar 20-23: Turespaña Masters, Maspalomas, Grand Canaria.
Mar 27-30: Madeira Island Open.
Apr 10-13: US Masters, Augusta, Georgia.
Apr 24-27: Peugeot Spanish Open.
May 1-4: Conte of Florence Italian Open.
May 8-11: Benson and Hedges International Open, The Oxfordshire.
May 9-11: Turkish Seniors Open, Antalya.
May 15-18: Alamo English Open.
May 16-18: Irish Seniors Open, St Margaret's, Dublin.
May 23-26: Volvo PGA championship, Wentworth.
May 29-June 1: Deutsche Bank Open-TPC of Europe.
June 5-8: Slaley Hall Northumberland Challenge, Slaley Hall, Hexham.
June 6-8: Jersey Seniors Open, La Moye.
June 12-15: US Open, Congressional, Bethesda, Maryland.
June 13-15: De Vere Seniors Classic, Belton Woods, Lincolnshire.
June 19-22: Volvo German Open.
June 20-22: Ryder Collingtree Seniors Classic, Collingtree Park.
June 26-29: Peugeot French Open, Paris.
June 27-29: Swedish Seniors Classic, vtba.
July 3-5: Lawrence Batley Seniors, Huddersfield.
July 3-6: Murphy's Irish Open, Druids Glen, Co Wicklow.
July 10-12: Loch Lomond World Invitational.
July 11-13: Senior German Open, Idstein, Frankfurt.
July 13-14: Open championship, final qualifying, Glasgow Gailes, Irvine, Kilmarnock, Western Gailes.
July 17-20: Open championship, Royal Troon.
July 24-27: Sun Dutch Open; Senior British Open, Royal Portrush.
July 31-Aug 3: Volvo Scandinavian Masters.
Aug 1-3: Wentworth Senior Masters, Edinburgh Course, Wentworth.
Aug 6-8: British seniors championship, Sherwood Forest and Coxmoor.
Aug 7-10: Chemapol Trophy Czech Open.
Aug 8-10: Credit Suisse Seniors Open, Bad Ragaz, Switzerland.
Aug 11-15: British boys championship, Saunton.
Aug 14-17: US PGA Championship, Winged Foot, Mamaroneck, New York.
Aug 21-24: Smurfit European Open, The K Club, Dublin.
Aug 22-25: Belfry PGA Seniors Championship, The Belfry, Sutton Coldfield.
Aug 28-31: BMW International Open.
Sept 4-7: Canon European Masters, Crans-sur-Sierre, Switzerland.
Sept 5-7: Scottish Seniors Open, Newmacher, Aberdeen.
Sept 11-14: Lancôme Trophy, St-Nom-la-Bretèche, Paris.
Sept 18-21: One 2 One British Masters.
Sept 19-21: Czech Seniors Open, Mariánské Lázně, Czech Republic.
Sept 26-28: Ryder Cup, Valderrama, Spain.
Oct 2-5: Linde German Masters.
Oct 9-12: Toyota World Match Play championship, Wentworth.
Oct 16-19: Alfred Dunhill Cup, St Andrews.
Oct 17-19: Player Championship, The Buckinghamshire, Denham.
Oct 23-26: Oki Pro-Am.
Oct 30-Nov 2: Volvo Masters, Montecastillo, Jerez, Spain.
Nov 6-9: Sarazen World Open, Chateau Elan, Atlanta.
Nov 20-23: World Cup of Golf, Kiawah Island, South Carolina.

Women

Jan 9-12: LPGA Chrysler-Plymouth tournament of champions, Fort Lauderdale.
Jan 17-19: LPGA Healthsouth inaugural tournament, Orlando.
Feb 6-9: LPGA Palm Beach national pro-am, West Palm Beach, Florida.
Feb 13-16: LPGA Los Angeles women's championship, Glendale, California.
Feb 20-22: LPGA Cup Noodles Hawaiian ladies open, Kapolei
Mar 13-16: LPGA Welch's/Circle K championship, Tucson.
Mar 20-23: LPGA Standard Register Ping, Phoenix.
Mar 27-30: LPGA Nabisco Dinah Shore, Mission Hills, California.
Apr 3-6: Twelve Bridges LPGA Classic, Lincoln, California.
Apr 17-20: Myrtle Beach LPGA Classic, Murrells Inlet, South Carolina.
Apr 25-27: LPGA Chick-a-fil A charity championship, Stockbridge, Georgia.
May 1-4: LPGA Sprint Titleholders championship, Daytona Beach, Florida.
May 8-11: Estoril Open.
May 9-11: LPGA Sara Lee Classic, Old Hickory, Tennessee.
May 15-18: Tour Players' Classic, The Tytherington, Macclesfield; McDonald's LPGA championship, Wilmington, Delaware.
May 22-25: Czech Republic Open, Praha Karlstejn, Prague; LPGA Corning Classic, Corning, New York.
May 29-June 1: Polish Open, Amber Baltic, Miedzyzdroje; LPGA Heartland Classic, St Louis, Missouri.
June 5-8: LPGA Oldsmobile Classic, East Lansing, Michigan.
June 6-8: Ford-Stimarol Danish Open, Vejle.
June 12-15: Desse Swiss Open, Lausanne.
June 13-15: Edina Realty LPGA Classic, Maple Grove, Minnesota.
June 18-21: Evian Masters, Evian, France.
June 19-22: LPGA Rochester International, Pittsford, New York.
June 26-29: Hennessy Cup, Cologne.
June 27-29: ShopRite LPGA Classic, Somers Point, New Jersey.
July 3-6: Austrian Open, vtba; LPGA Jamie Farr Kroger Classic, Sylvania, Ohio.
July 10-13: US Women's Open, Pumpkin Ridge, Oregon.
July 17-20: LPGA JAL Big Apple Classic, New Rochelle, New York.
July 24-27: German Open, Treudelberg, Hamburg.
July 25-27: Giant Eagle LPGA Classic, Warren, Ohio.
July 31-Aug 3: Du Maurier Classic, Glen Abbey, Toronto.
Aug 7-10: McDonald's WPGA championship of Europe, Gleneagles; LPGA Friendly's Classic, Agawam, Massachusetts.
Aug 14-17: Weetabix Women's British Open, Sunningdale.
Aug 21-24: Compaq Open, Osterakers, Stockholm.
Aug 22-24: Star Bank LPGA Classic, Beavercreek, Ohio.
Aug 28-31: Marks and Spencer European Open, vtba.
Aug 30-Sept 1: State Farm Rail Classic, Springfield, Illinois.
Sept 4-7: French Open, Paris
Sept 5-7: Safeway LPGA championship, Portland, Oregon.
Sept 11-14: English Open, vtba; LPGA Safeco Classic, Kent, Washington.
Sept 18-21: Guardian Irish Open, vtba; LPGA Ping Welch's championship, Canton, Massachusetts.
Sept 25-28: Turkish Open, Antalya; LPGA Fieldcrest Cannon Classic, Charlotte, North Carolina.
Oct 2-5: Women's World Match Play championship, vtba; LPGA CoreStates Betsy King Classic, Kutztown, Pennsylvania.
Oct 9-12: Samsung world championship, vtbc.
Oct 24-26: Air France Open de Deauville.
Oct 31-Nov 2: Nichirei international, Japan.
Nov 7-9: Toray Japan Queens' Cup, Japan.
Nov 20-23: ITT LPGA Tour championship, Las Vegas.
Dec 4-7: LPGA JC Penney Classic, Tarpon Spring, Florida.
Dec 12-14: Diners Club matches, vtbc.
Dec 20-21: Wendy's three-tour challenge, Henderson, Nevada.

Amateur

Jan 8-12: President's Putter, Rye
Apr 26-27: Helen Holm women's tournament, Royal Troon.
May 3-4: Lytham Trophy, Royal Lytham and St Annes; Berkshire Trophy, The Berkshire.
May 10-11: England v Spain, La Manga.
May 16-18: Brabazon Trophy, Saunton.
May 18-20: Welsh women's championship, Northop.
May 20-24: English women's championship, Saunton; Irish women's championship, Enniscrone; Scottish women's championship, West Kilbride.
May 24-25: St Andrews Links Trophy, St Andrews.
May 28-29: Lagonda Trophy, Gog Magog.
June 2-7: British championship, Royal St George's and Royal Cinque Ports.
June 10-14: British women's championship, Cruden Bay.
June 25-29: European men's team championships, Portmarnock.
July 26-27: Vagliano Trophy, Halmstad, Sweden.
July 28-Aug 2: English championship, Royal Liverpool; Scottish championship, Carnoustie.
July 29-Aug 2: Welsh championship, Pyle & Kenfig.
Aug 5-8: British girls' championship, Royal Montrose.
Aug 6-8: British seniors championships, Sherwood Forest and Coxmoor.
Aug 9-10: Walker Cup, Quaker Ridge, New York.
Aug 9-15: Irish championship, Westport.
Aug 12-14: Girls' home internationals, Royal Montrose
Aug 13-17: British Mid-Amateur championship, Prestwick
Aug 20-22: British women's strokeplay, Silloth-on-Solway.
Aug 21-23: International European championship, Geneva
Sept 10-12: Men's home internationals, Burnham and Berrow
Women's home internationals, Lahinch
Sept 30-Oct 2: Senior British women's championship, Frilford Heath.

GYMNASTICS

Mar 14-16: International tournament, Cottbus, Germany.
Mar 15: BUSA Championships, Lilleshall.
Mar 22-23: Grand prix, Paris; British rhythmic championships, Bletchley
Apr 19-20: British women's team championships.
Apr 26-27: European rhythmic masters, Paris
May 4: British rhythmic team championships, Burton-on-Trent
May 9-11: British women's senior and junior championships, Guildford.
May 29-30: World sports aerobics championships, Perth, Australia.
June 7: Welsh Open, Cardiff.
June 24-30: European sports acrobatics championships, Germany.
Sept 1-7: World championships, Lausanne.
Sept 18-21: World sports acrobatics championships, Manchester
Oct 22-25: World rhythmic championships, Berlin.
Nov 8-9: British men's championships, Lilleshall

HANDBALL

May 17-25: World championships, preliminary rounds.
May 27-June 1: World championships, play-off matches
May 31: World championships, semi-finals
June 1: World championships, final

HOCKEY

Jan 17-19: European nations indoor cup, Liévin, France
Jan 24-26: Women's European Under-21 nations cup, Ceske Budevice, Czech Republic.
Feb 7: Indoor club championships finals, Crystal Palace
Mar 4-15: World Cup qualifying tournament, Kuala Lumpur
Mar 16-23: Golden Jubilee tournament, Karachi.
Mar 21-23: Women's Under-18 and Under-16 home countries tournaments, Dublin
Mar 28-31: European Cup-Winners' Cup, A division, Reading.
Apr 13: HA Cup semi-finals.
May 11: HA finals day, Milton Keynes.
May 16-19: European club championships, A division, The Hague; B division, Amsicora Italy.
Aug 1-12: England women's World Cup qualifying tournament, Zimbabwe
Sept 17-28: Under-21 World Cup, Milton Keynes.
Oct 9-19: Champions Trophy, Adelaide
Oct 15-25: Women's Under-21 World Cup, Songnam, Korea.
Nov 15-23: Women's five nations tournament, Kuala Lumpur

ICE HOCKEY

Feb 4: International match, Great Britain v Japan, Blackburn.
Mar 1-2: Superleague play-offs
Mar 8-9: Superleague play-offs
Mar 15-16: Superleague play-offs.
Mar 22: Superleague semi-finals, Manchester
Mar 29: Superleague final, Manchester.

ICE SKATING

Jan 3-4: British short track championships, Guildford
Jan 10-12: European speed championships, Heerenveen, Holland.
Jan 18-19: European short track championships, Malmo, Sweden.
Jan 19-26: European figure championships, Paris.
Feb 1-2: World sprint championships, Hamar, Norway.
Feb 14-16: World speed championships, Nagano, Japan
Feb 28-Mar 2: International Skating Union figure champions' series, Hamilton, Ontario
Mar 16-23: World figure championships, Lausanne
Mar 26-30: World short track championships, Nagano

JUDO

Feb 1: Bulgarian A tournament, Sofia
Feb 7-9: Paris A tournament
Feb 22-23: German A tournament, Munich
Mar 1-2: Hungarian A tournament, Budapest
Mar 8-9: Prague A tournament
Mar 15-16: Polish A tournament, Warsaw
Mar 22-23: Italian A tournament, Rome
Apr 5-6: Dutch A tournament, 's-Hertogenbosch
Apr 5: British Open championships, Birmingham
May 8-11: European championships, Ostend
Oct 9-12: World championships, Paris
Oct 18-19: European team championships, Rome
Nov 13-16: European junior championships, Slovenia.
Dec 6: Swiss A tournament, Basle

KORFBALL

Jan 4-5: European club championships, Barcelona
Jan 31-Feb 1: Under-23 tournament, Apeldoorn, Holland
Feb 28-Mar 2: European student championships, Utrecht, Holland
Mar 2: National league play-offs
Mar 9-9: BUSA championships, Nottingham
Mar 16: National league play-offs
Mar 22: National league finals, Crystal Palace
Apr 12: Under-23 club championships, vtbc
Apr 19: Senior, Under-12, Under-16 cup finals, Crystal Palace
July 26-27: British county championships, Edinburgh

LACROSSE

Feb 2 and 9: Daily Telegraph Flags competition finals
Feb 8-9: Women's senior territorial championships, High Wycombe
Feb 22-23: Women's senior territorial championships, Weybridge
Mar 1: Women's junior internationals
Mar 7-9: Women's triangular international tournament, Banbury
Mar 22-23: Women's clubs and colleges tournament, Cobham
Apr 6: Daily Telegraph Flag finals, Stockport
Apr 25-May 5: Women's World Cup, Tokyo
May 25: Iroquois Cup
July 21-27: Men's and women's European championships, Stockholm
Dec 6: Women's counties championships

LUGE

Jan 16-19: World Cup, La Plagne, France
Jan 22-26: World Cup, Altenberg, Germany
Feb 4-9: World championships, Lake Placid, United States

MOTORCYCLING

Jan 12: National cyclo-cross championships, Sutton Park, Birmingham
Apr 13: Malaysian Grand Prix, Shah Alam
Apr 20: Japanese Grand Prix, Suzuka
May 4: Spanish Grand Prix, Jerez
May 18: Italian Grand Prix, Mugello
June 1: Austrian Grand Prix, Zeltweg
June 15: French Grand Prix, Castellet
June 28: Dutch Grand Prix, Assen
July 6: Imola Grand Prix, Imola
July 20: German Grand Prix, Nürburgring
Aug 3: to be confirmed: Chinese, Argentine or Brazilian Grand Prix
Aug 17: British Grand Prix, Donington Park
Aug 31: Czech Grand Prix, Brno
Sept 14: Catalunya Grand Prix, Barcelona
Sept 28: Indonesian Grand Prix, Sentul
Oct 12: Australian Grand Prix, Phillip Island

MOTOR RACING

Mar 9: Australian Grand Prix, Melbourne.
Mar 30: Brazilian Grand Prix, Interlagos, Sao Paulo.
Mar 31: British touring car championship, Donington
Apr 13: Argentine Grand Prix, Buenos Aires
Apr 20: British touring car championship, Silverstone
Apr 27: San Marino Grand Prix, Imola
May 5: British touring car championship, Thruxton
May 11: Monaco Grand Prix, Monte Carlo
May 18: British touring car championship, Brands Hatch
May 25: Spanish Grand Prix, Barcelona
May 26: British touring car championship, Oulton Park
June 14-15: Le Mans 24-hour race
June 15: Canadian Grand Prix, Montreal; British touring car championship, Donington Park
June 29: French Grand Prix, Magny-Cours; British touring car championship, Croft
July 13: British Grand Prix, Silverstone
July 27: German Grand Prix, Hockenheim
Aug 3: British touring car championship, Knockhill
Aug 10: Hungarian Grand Prix, Budapest; British touring car championship, Snetterton.
Aug 24: Belgian Grand Prix, Spa-Francorchamps
Aug 25: British touring car championship, Thruxton
Sept 7: Italian Grand Prix, Monza; British touring car championship, Brands Hatch
Sept 21: Austrian Grand Prix, Zeltweg; British touring car championship, Silverstone
Sept 28: Luxembourg Grand Prix, Nürburgring, Germany
Oct 12: Japanese Grand Prix, Suzuka
Oct 26: Portuguese Grand Prix, Estoril
Nov 2: RAC Veteran Car Run, London to Brighton

MOTOR RALLYING

Jan 18-23: Monte Carlo rally, Monaco
Feb 7-10: International Swedish rally, Karlstad
Mar 2-5: Kenya Safari rally, Nairobi
Mar 15-16: Vauxhall Rally of Wales
Mar 22-27: Rally of Portugal, Figueira da Foz
Apr 13-16: Rally of Spain, Lloret de Mar
Apr 26-27: Pirelli International Rally
May 4-8: Rally of France, Ajaccio, Corsica
May 20-24: Rally of Argentina, Cordoba
June 6-7: Scottish International Rally
June 8-10: Acropolis Rally, Athens
Aug 1-3: Stena Line Ulster Rally
Aug 1-5: Rally of New Zealand, Auckland
Aug 20-25: 1,000 Lakes Rally, Jyväskylä, Finland
Sept 11-13: Manx International Rally
Sept 17-21: Rally of Indonesia, Medan
Oct 11-15: San Remo rally, Italy
Oct 30-Nov 3: Rally of Australia, Perth
Nov 21-24: RAC Rally, Great Britain, Chester

NETBALL

Jan 25: International match, Wales v England, Cardiff
Feb 8: International match, England v Ireland
Mar 1-2: FENA Under-21 tournament, Malta
Mar 8: National schools final, Sussex
Mar 22: International match, Northern Ireland v England
Apr 26: National youth championships
Apr 26-May 16: England tour of South Africa
July 5-6: National junior championships

ORIENTEERING

Feb 23: British night championships, East Anglia
Apr 27: British championships
July 10-13: World junior championships, Belgium
Aug 11-16: World championships, Grimstad, Norway
Nov 16: British schools championships

PENTATHLON

Feb 22-23: British modern tetrathlon championships, Bracknell
Apr 19-20: British modern junior and youth pentathlon championships, East Grinstead
May 10-11: British modern triathlon championships, Milton Keynes
July 5-6: British modern pentathlon championships, Milton Keynes.
Nov 2: British schools biathlon championships, Cheslyn Hay
Nov 29-30: British modern biathlon championships, vtbc

POLO

May 9-25: Prince of Wales Trophy, Royal Berkshire.
May 13-June 1: Royal Windsor Cup, Guards
May 20-June 1: Warwickshire Cup, Cirencester
May 24-26: Waterloo Cup, Ascot
June 3-8: Dollar Cup, Cowdray Park.
June 3-22: Queen's Cup, Guards
June 15: University match, Oxford v Cambridge, Cambridge
June 17-July 6: Eduardo Moore tournament, Royal Berkshire
June 20: Young England international, John Cowdray Trophy, Cirencester
June 21-28: Prince of Wales Cup, Beaufort
July 2-20: Veuve Clicquot Gold Cup, British open, Cowdray Park
July 27: Cartier International Day, Guards.

POWERBOATING

Offshore

United Kingdom Offshore Boating Association
May 4: Spithead Trophy, Gosport
June 8: Dolphin GP, Gosport
June 29: Cleethorpes GP
July 13: Eastbourne GP
Aug 2-3: Falmouth GP
Sept 21: Bournemouth GP

Inland circuit

UIM Formula One *championship*
May 4: Aioa
May 18: Belgrade
May 25: Dunaujvaros, Hungary
June 8: St Petersburg
June 22: Chalon
July 13: Corfu
July 20: Gallipoli
Aug 3: Cambione
Sept 28: Vietnam
Oct 19: China
Nov 28: Cuba
Dec 12: Abu Dhabi

RACING

Jan 11: Victor Chandler Chase, Ascot; The Ladbroke, Leopardstown
Jan 19: AIG Europe Irish Champion Hurdle, Leopardstown
Feb 2: Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup, Leopardstown
Feb 8: Tote Gold Trophy, Newbury
Feb 22: Racing Post Chase, Kempton
Mar 11: Smurfit Champion Hurdle, Cheltenham
Mar 12: Queen Mother Champion Chase, Cheltenham
Mar 13: Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup, Cheltenham
Mar 22: Tote Lincoln, Doncaster
Mar 29: Dubai World Cup, Nad Al Sheba
Mar 31: Jameson Irish National, Fairyhouse
Apr 5: Martell Grand National, Aintree
Apr 15: Nell Gwyn Stakes, Newmarket
Apr 16: NGK Spark Plugs European Free Handicap, Newmarket
Apr 17: Craven Stakes, Newmarket
Apr 18: Dubai Duty Free Fred Darling Stakes, Newbury
Apr 19: Stakis Casinos Scottish National, Ayr; Tripleprint Greenham Stakes, Newbury
Apr 22-24: Punchestown Festival
Apr 25: Sandown Mile, Sandown
Apr 26: Whitbread Gold Cup, Sandown
May 3: Pertemps 2,000 Guineas, Newmarket; Kentucky Derby, Churchill Downs
May 4: Pertemps 1,000 Guineas, Newmarket
May 6: Chester Vase, Chester
May 7: Tote Chester Cup, Chester
May 11: French 2,000 Guineas (Poule d'Essai des Poulains), Longchamp; French 1,000 Guineas (Poule d'Essai des Pouliches), Longchamp
May 14: Homeowners Dante Stakes, York
May 17: Preakness Stakes, Pimlico; Juddmonte Lockinge Stakes, Newbury
May 24: Airlie Coolmore Irish 1,000 Guineas, The Curragh
May 25: Lexus Ireland Irish 2,000 Guineas, The Curragh
June 1: French Derby (Prix du Jockey Club), Chantilly
June 6: Vodafone Oaks, Epsom.
June 7: Vodafone Derby, Epsom; Vodafone Coronation Cup, Epsom; Belmont Stakes, Belmont Park, New York
June 17: St James's Palace Stakes, Royal Ascot
June 18: Coronation Stakes, Royal Ascot
June 19: Gold Cup, Royal Ascot
June 20: King's Stand Stakes, Royal Ascot
June 28: Newcastle Brown Ale Northumberland Plate, Newcastle

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June 29: Budweiser Irish Derby, The Curragh
July 5: Coral Eclipse, Sandown
July 8: Princess of Wales's Stakes, Newmarket
July 9: TNT International Aviation July Stakes, Newmarket
July 10: Darley July Cup, Newmarket
July 13: Kildangan Irish Oaks, The Curragh
July 28: King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes, Ascot
July 28-Aug 2: Galway Festival
July 29: William Hill Cup Handicap, Goodwood
July 30: Sussex Stakes Goodwood
July 31: Schweppes Golden Mile, Goodwood
Aug 1: Jockey Club of Kenya Molecomb Stakes, Goodwood
Aug 2: Vodac Stewards' Cup, Goodwood
Aug 10: Heinz 57 Stakes, Leopardstown
Aug 19: Juddmonte International Stakes, York
Aug 20: Tote Ebor Handicap, York
Aug 21: Nunthorpe Stakes, York
Aug 23: Tripleprint Celebration Mile, Goodwood
Sept 6: Sprint Cup, Haydock
Sept 7: Moyglare Stud Stakes, The Curragh
Sept 10: Tote-Portland Handicap, Doncaster
Sept 11: East Coast Doncaster Cup, Doncaster
Sept 12: Laurent-Perrier Champagne Stakes, Doncaster
Sept 13: Parlemps St Leger, Doncaster
Sept 20: Ladbroke Ayr Gold Cup Ayr; BonusPrint Mill Reef Stakes, Newbury; Irish St Leger, The Curragh
Sept 27: Queen Elizabeth II, Stakes Ascot
Sept 28: Fillies' Mile, Ascot
Sept 30: Shadwell Stud Cheveley Park Stakes, Newmarket
Oct 2: Middle Park Stakes, Newmarket
Oct 4: Tote Cambridgeshire, Newmarket
Oct 5: Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe, Longchamp
Oct 17: Dewhurst Stakes, Newmarket
Oct 18: Dubai Champion Stakes, Tote Cesarewitch, Newmarket
Oct 25: Racing Post Trophy, Doncaster
Nov 4: Melbourne Cup, Flemington
Nov 8: Breeders' Cup, Hollywood Park
Nov 15: Murphy's Gold Cup, Cheltenham
Nov 23: Japan Cup, Tokyo
Nov 29: Hennessy Cognac Gold Cup, Newbury
Dec 13: Tripleprint Gold Cup, Cheltenham
Dec 26: King George VI Chase, Kempton
Dec 27: Coral Welsh National, Chepstow

RACKETS

Jan 25-26: Professional singles championship, Tonbridge
Jan 30-Feb 9: Open singles championship, Queen's Club
Feb 10-15: Combined Services championship, Queen's Club
Feb 15-23: Amateur doubles championship, Queen's Club
Feb 25: University match, Oxford v Cambridge, Queen's Club
Mar 18: National League final, Winchester
Mar 19-24: Public Schools doubles championship, Queen's Club
Apr 4-13: Open doubles championship, Queen's Club

REAL TENNIS

Jan 10-14: Professional doubles championship, Queen's Club
Feb 6-9: Seacourt Silver Racquet
Feb 10-15: Combined Services championship, Queen's Club
Feb 28-Mar 1: University match, Oxford v Cambridge, Manchester
Mar 8-16: Amateur singles championship, Holyport
Apr 23-27: Women's British Open singles championship, Seacourt
May 2-5: Amateur doubles championship, Moreton Morrell
May 5-11: Professional singles championship, Holyport

ROWING

Mar 8: Women's head of the river, Tideway
Mar 19: Schools head of the river, Tideway
Mar 22: Head of the River race, Tideway
Mar 23: Women's University boat race, Oxford v Cambridge, Henley
Mar 29: University boat race, Oxford v Cambridge, Tideway
Apr 5: Vesta sculllers' head of the river, Tideway
May 23-25: National schools regatta, Nottingham
May 31-June 1: World Cup regatta, Munich
June 21-22: Henley women's regatta; World Cup regatta, Paris
July 2-6: Henley Royal Regatta
July 11-13: World Cup regatta, Lucerne
July 18-20: National championships, Nottingham
July 19-20: Nations cup under-23 championships, Milan
July 26: Home International, Holme Pierrepont
Aug 1-3: Coupe de la Jeunesse, Holme Pierrepont
Aug 6-10: Junior world championships, Hazewinkel
Sept 1-7: World championships, Aiguebelette
Oct 4: Thames world sculling challenge
Oct 11: Pairs head of the river, Tideway
Nov 7-9: Masters regatta, Adelaide
Nov 8: Fours head of the river, Tideway

RUGBY LEAGUE

Jan 31-Feb 2: World nines, Townsville, Australia
Mar 1: Australasian Super League season begins
Mar 2: First and second division seasons start
Mar 11: University match, Oxford v Cambridge
Mar 14: Stones European SuperLeague season begins
Mar 22: First Silk Cut Challenge Cup semi-final
Mar 29: Second Silk Cut Challenge Cup semi-final
Apr 12: Tri-series (New Zealand, New South Wales, Queensland) begins
Apr 25: Australia v New Zealand, Sydney
May 3: Silk Cut Challenge Cup final, Wembley
June 6-22: First series of world club championship
July 18-Aug 3: Second series of world club championship
July 27: First and second division premiership begins
Sept 7: Stones premiership begins
Oct 4: World club championship semi-finals
Oct 11: World club championship final
Oct 17: New Zealand v Australia, Auckland
Nov 1: Great Britain v Australia, vtbc
Nov 8: Great Britain v Australia, vtbc
Nov 15: Great Britain v Australia, vtbc

RUGBY UNION

Jan 1: Emerging Wales v United States, Cardiff
Jan 4: Ireland v Italy, Dublin; Heineken Cup semi-final, Leicester v Toulouse; Neath v United States, Scotland Under-18 v Wales Under-18, Myreside
Jan 4-5: Punta del Este sevens
Jan 5: Heineken Cup semi-final, Brive v Cardiff
Jan 7: Pontypridd v United States
Jan 11: Wales v United States, Cardiff
Jan 17: Ireland A v France A, Donnybrook; Scotland A v Wales A, Myreside; Scotland Under-21 v Wales Under-21, vtbc; Ireland Under-21 v France Under-21, vtbc
Jan 18: Ireland v France, Dublin; Scotland v Wales, Edinburgh; World Cup qualifier, Sri Lanka v Singapore, vtbc; CIS county championship quarter-finals
Jan 19: Scottish Cup third round
Jan 25: Heineken Cup final; Pilkington Cup sixth round, Swalec Cup fifth round
Jan 26: England women v Scotland women, Blackheath
Jan 28: Scotland development XV v Otago, Stirling
Jan 31: England A v Scotland A, Stoop Memorial Ground, England A v Otago, Bristol; Wales A v Ireland A, Pontypridd; England Under-21 v Scotland Under-21, Harlequins
Feb 1: England v Scotland, Twickenham; Wales v Ireland, Cardiff; World Cup qualifier, Singapore v Thailand, vtbc
Feb 8: World Cup qualifier, Papua New Guinea v Tahiti, vtbc
Feb 9: Ireland women v England women, vtbc
Feb 14: Ireland A v England A, Donnybrook; France A v Wales A, vtbc; Ireland Under-21 v England Under-21, Greystones; French Students v Welsh Students, vtbc
Feb 15: Ireland v England, Dublin; France v Wales, Paris; World Cup qualifier, Thailand v Sri Lanka, vtbc; French Schools v Welsh Schools, vtbc
Feb 20: World Cup qualifier, Tahiti v Cook Islands, vtbc
Feb 22: Pilkington Cup quarter-finals, Swalec Cup sixth round; Italy Juniors v Welsh Youth, vtbc
Feb 23: England women v France women, Northampton
Feb 28: England A v France A, Leicester; Scotland A v Ireland A, vtbc; England Under-21 v France Under-21, Leicester; Scotland Under-21 v Ireland Under-21, vtbc; England Colts v Italy Juniors, Bedford
Mar 1: England v France, Twickenham; Scotland v Ireland, Edinburgh; World Cup qualifier, Yugoslavia v Switzerland, vtbc
Mar 8: CIS county championship semi-finals: Scotland Under-19 v England Colts, Stirling; Welsh Youth v France Youth, Narberth
Mar 9: Wales women v England women, Llanelli
Mar 14: France A v Scotland A, Paris; France Under-21 v Scotland Under-21; Welsh Students v English Students, vtbc
Mar 15: France v Scotland, Paris; Wales v England, Cardiff; World Cup qualifier, Luxembourg v Andorra
Mar 18-31: FIRA youth tournament, Buenos Aires
Mar 19: Busa final, Twickenham
Mar 21-23: World Cup sevens, Hong Kong
Mar 22: Swalec Cup quarter-finals; Scottish Cup fourth round, England Under-18 v France Under-18, Twickenham
Mar 23: France v Italy, Grenoble
Mar 29: Pilkington Cup semi-finals, Ireland Under-18 v England Under-18, Dublin
Apr 2: England Under-18 v Scotland Under-18, Preston
Apr 5: Wales Under-18 v Ireland Under-18, vtbc
Apr 6: Scottish Cup fifth round
Apr 12: Swalec Cup semi-finals, Royal Navy v Army, Twickenham; England Colts v Welsh Youth, Oxford; Wales Under-18 v England Under-18, vtbc
Apr 16: Army v RAF, Twickenham
Apr 19: World Cup qualifier, Sweden v Luxembourg, vtbc; CIS county championship final, Twickenham; France Juniors v England Colts, vtbc
Apr 20: Scottish Cup quarter-finals
Apr 23: RAF v Royal Navy, Twickenham
Apr 26: World Cup qualifier, Austria v Ukraine, vtbc; Swalec Cup final, Cardiff
Apr 27: Scottish Cup semi-finals
May 3: World Cup qualifiers, Moldova v Norway, vtbc; Lithuania v Sweden, vtbc; Hungary v Andorra, vtbc; RFU intermediate and Junior cup finals, Twickenham
May 10: World Cup qualifiers, Yugoslavia v Israel, vtbc; Latvia v Bulgaria, vtbc; Croatia v Moldova, vtbc; Pacific Rim championship, Canada v United States, Vancouver; Pilkington Cup final, Twickenham; Scottish Cup final, Edinburgh; Irish provincial cup finals
May 17: World Cup qualifiers, Ukraine v Israel, vtbc; Croatia v Latvia, vtbc; Pacific Rim championship, Hong Kong v United States, Hong Kong; Middlesex sevens, Twickenham
May 24: World Cup qualifiers, Switzerland v Austria, vtbc; Norway v Bulgaria, vtbc; Pacific Rim championship, Japan v United States, Tokyo; Eastern Province invitation XV v British Isles, Port Elizabeth; Sanyo Cup, Twickenham
May 28: Border v British Isles, East London
May 31: World Cup qualifier, Hungary v Lithuania, vtbc; Western Province v British Isles, Cape Town; French club final, Paris
June 4: South-East Transvaal v British Isles, Witbank
June 7: Northern Transvaal v British Isles, Pretoria; Pacific Rim championship, United States v Japan, San Francisco
June 10: Victoria v France, Melbourne
June 11: Transvaal v British Isles, Johannesburg
June 13: ACT v France, Canberra
June 14: New Zealand v Fiji, Albany; Natal v British Isles, Durban; Pacific Rim championship, United States v Hong Kong, San Francisco
June 17: Emerging Springboks v British Isles, Wellington; Queensland v France, Brisbane
June 21: South Africa v British Isles, Cape Town; Australia v France, Sydney; New Zealand v Argentina, Wellington
June 24: Free State v British Isles, Bloemfontein; Australian XV v France, Newcastle
June 28: South Africa v British Isles, Durban; Australia v France, Brisbane; New Zealand v Argentina, Hamilton; Pacific Rim championship, United States v Canada, San Francisco
July 1: Northern Free State v British Isles, Welkom
July 5: South Africa v British Isles, Johanesburg; New Zealand v Australia, Christchurch
July 8: Western Australia v England, Perth
July 12: Australia v England, Sydney
July 19: South Africa v New Zealand, Pretoria
July 26: Australia v New Zealand, Melbourne
Aug 2: Australia v South Africa, Brisbane
Aug 9: New Zealand v South Africa, Auckland
Aug 16: New Zealand v Australia, Dunedin
Aug 23: South Africa v Australia, Johannesburg
Nov-Dec: New Zealand to tour England/Wales, South Africa to tour France, Australia to tour Argentina/England
Nov 29: England v South Africa, Twickenham
Dec 6: Scotland v South Africa, Edinburgh
Dec 9: Oxford v Cambridge, Twickenham

SAILING

Feb 16-23: 5000 World Cup, Lake Garda, Italy
Mar 10-21: Enterprise world championships, Goa, India
Mar 22-28: J22 world championships, Cape Town
Mar 31-Apr 4: National youth championships, Pwllheli
May 12-17: Royal Lymington Cup
May 21-25: Spa Olympic Regatta, Medemblick, Holland
May 24-June 6: Fireball world championships, Weymouth
May 31: Round the Island race
June 7-14: World blind championships, Weymouth
June 21-29: Kiel Olympic Regatta
July 3-12: Finn Gold Cup, Gdansk
July 12-17: Laser Radial youth world championships, Morocco
July 18-24: Laser Radial open world championships, Morocco
July 19-25: GP14 world championships, Skerries YC, Ireland
July 19-26: Soling world championships, Copenhagen
July 20-26: Laser Radial open and women's world championships, Morocco
July 25-31: Flying Fifteen world championships, Cowes Corinthian YC
July 25-Aug 4: ISAF world youth championships, Japan
July 28-Aug 1: UK youth match racing championships, Grafham Water
July 28-Aug 8: Optimist world championships, Largs
July 28-Aug 14: Champagne Mumm Admiral's Cup
July 30-Aug 4: 420 world championships, Rhode Island
July 31-Aug 8: Minor world championships, Ontario
Aug 1: Cadet world championships, Torquay
Aug 2-9: Skandia Life Cowes Week
Aug 3-10: Europe world championships, San Francisco
Aug 9: Fastnet race
Aug 9-10: Challenger national championships, Rutland Water
Aug 16-22: Laser II world championships, Waterford
Aug 18-22: Tempest world championships, Durham
Sept 3-13: Star world championships, Marblehead, United States
Sept 11-19: Snipe world championships, San Diego
Sept 20-21: Women's national championships, Grafham Water
Sept 21: Start of Whitbread Round the World Race, Southampton
Oct 5-13: Gold Cup match racing, Bermuda
Oct 13-19: National match racing championships, Bewl Valley
Nov 7-14: Tornado world championships, Bermuda

SHOOTING

Jan 10-30: Great Britain Australian tour
Feb 7-9: British air rifle championships, Aldersley
Feb 14-16: British air rifle championships, Aldersley
Feb 23: British running target championships, Aldersley
Mar 20-23: RAF pistol championships, Bisley
Mar 29-31: Bisley Easter rifle meeting
Apr 17-20: Army open pistol championships, Bisley
May 3: LMRA schools meeting, Bisley
May 3-5: English smallbore championships, Bisley
May 4-5: NRA team v Europe, Bisley
May 10-11: NRA 330m championships, Bisley
May 24-26: English XX championships, Bisley
June 14-15: Inter-counties rifle meeting, Bisley
June 29-July 6: RAF, Royal Navy and Royal Marines championships, Bisley
July 4-6: Territorial Army championships, Bisley
July 5-6: British Commonwealth RC meeting, Bisley
July 7-8: NRA Services meeting, Bisley
July 12-13: NRA Historic Arms meeting, Bisley
July 12-17: NRA Match rifle meeting, Bisley
July 14-17: NRA Schools meeting, Bisley
July 17: Ashburton Shield, Bisley
July 18: Cadet national match, Bisley
July 18-26: NRA Imperial meeting, Bisley; NRA Target Rifle meeting, Bisley
July 26: Queen's prize final, Bisley
Aug 9-18: National smallbore rifle championships, Bisley
Aug 15-17: National smallbore pistol championships, Bisley
Aug 23-25: Welsh Open, Bisley
Sept 2-4: Police national championships, Bisley
Sept 20-21: Combined Services pistol meeting, Bisley
Sept 27-28: English VIII match rifle meeting, Bisley

SKIING

Men

Jan 5-6: World Cup, Kranjska Gora, Slovenia
Jan 11-12: World Cup, Chamonix, France
Jan 14: World Cup, Adelboden, Switzerland
Jan 18-19: World Cup, Wengen, Switzerland
Jan 22-23: World Cup, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany
Jan 24-26: World Cup, Kitzbühel, Austria
Jan 29: World Cup, Laax, Switzerland
Feb 1-2: World Cup, Kvitfjell, Norway
Feb 2-16: World championships, Sestriere, Italy
Mar 5: World Cup, Shigakogen, Japan
Mar 12-16: World Cup finals, Vail, United States

Women

Jan 3-4: World Cup, Maribor, Slovenia
Jan 11-12: World Cup, Bad Kleinkirchheim, Austria
Jan 18-19: World Cup, Zwiesel, Germany
Jan 24-26: World Cup, Cortina, Italy
Feb 1-2: World Cup, Laax
Feb 2-16: World championships, Sestriere
Feb 28-Mar 1: World Cup, Nagano, Japan
Mar 6-7: World Cup, Mammoth Mountain, United States
Mar 12-16: World Cup finals, Vail

SNOOKER

Jan 2-5: Liverpool Victoria charity challenge, Birmingham
Jan 24-Feb 1: Regal Welsh open, Newport
Feb 2-9: Benson and Hedges masters, Wembley
Feb 13-22: International tournament, Aberdeen
Feb 23-Mar 2: European open, Valletta, Malta
Mar 10-16: Thailand open, Bangkok
Mar 18-23: Benson and Hedges Irish open, Goffs, Co Kildare
Mar 24-26: Embassy world championships final qualifying, Telford
Mar 27-Apr 5: British open, Plymouth
Apr 19-May 5: Embassy world championships, Sheffield

SPEEDWAY

July 27: Inter-continental final, Vastervik, Sweden
Aug 3: World junior final, Mseno, Czech Republic
Aug 9: British grand prix, vtba
Sept 14: World team cup final, Pila, Poland
Oct 5: Grand prix challenge, Wiener Neustadt, Austria

SQUASH

Jan 2-6: Commercial Union British junior open championships, Sheffield
Jan 21-27: British national championships, vtbc
Mar 19: National schools championships final, vtbc
Mar 22-30: European junior championships, Helsinki
Mar 26-Apr 6: Leekes British Open championships, Cardiff
Apr 19: National League final
Apr 23-26: European team championships, Odense, Denmark
May 4-11: World doubles championships, Hong Kong
May 10-11: Prince national club finals, vtbc
May 19-31: World masters, Johannesburg
July 26-Aug 9: World junior women's championships, Rio de Janeiro
Aug 7-17: World Games, Lahti, Finland
Aug 28-30: European club championships, Lisbon
Sept 24-27: European champion of champions tournament, Athens
Oct 13-18: Women's world open championships, Sydney
Nov 3-8: Perrier men's world open championships, Kuala Lumpur
Nov 9-15: Perrier men's world team championships, Kuala Lumpur
Dec 1-8: Mahindra international event, Bombay

SWIMMING

Jan 4-5: Fina World Cup event, Hong Kong
Jan 8-9: Fina World Cup event, Peking
Jan 22-23: Fina World Cup event, Espoo, Finland
Jan 25-26: Fina World Cup event, Malmö, Sweden
Jan 28-29: Fina World Cup event, Glasgow
Feb 1-2: Fina World Cup event, Gelsenkirchen, Germany
Feb 4-5: Fina World Cup event, Imperia, Italy
Feb 8-9: Fina World Cup event, Paris
Feb 28-Mar 1: Club team championships, Stockport
Apr 10-13: European trials, Sheffield
Apr 13-18: World short course championships, Gothenburg
May 24-25: Monte Carlo meeting
May 27-29: Barcelona meeting
May 30-June 1: Canet meeting
June 14: Open water 5km championships, Rudyard Lake
June 26: Open water 25km championships, Holme Pierrepont
July 4-7: Czech Open championship, Prague
July 17-20: National championships, Crystal Palace
July 31-Aug 3: European junior championships, Glasgow
Aug 4-9: National age-group championships, Coventry
Aug 13-24: European championships, Seville
Nov 1-2: National synchronised swimming championships, Leicester
Dec 11-14: National winter championships, Sheffield
Dec 13-16: Synchronised swimming World Cup, vtbc

TABLE TENNIS

Jan 7-12: English senior open
Jan 17-19: European nations cup, Germany
Mar 14-16: National championships, Brighton
Apr 24-May 5: World championships, Manchester
May 10: Yasaka grand prix, vtbc
July 1-7: European veteran championships, Prague
July 14-24: European youth championships, Slovakia

TENNIS

Jan 1-4: Hopman Cup, Perth, Australia
Jan 6-12: New South Wales Open, Sydney
Jan 13-26: Ford Australian Open, Melbourne
Feb 3-9: Austrian women's Open, Linz
Feb 7-9: Davis Cup world group first round
Feb 10-16: French women's Open, Paris
Feb 17-23: ATP championship, Antwerp and Memphis; Faber women's grand prix, Essen
Feb 24-Mar 2: ATP championship, Milan and Philadelphia
Mar 1-2: Fed Cup world group rounds
Mar 3-16: State Farm Evert Cup (women), Indian Wells
Mar 10-16: ATP Tour, Indian Wells
Mar 17-30: Lipton Championships, Key Biscayne, Florida
Mar 31-Apr 6: Family Circle Magazine Cup (women), Hilton Head Island
Apr 4-6: Davis Cup world group second round; Davis Cup Euro/African zone, group one, Great Britain v Ukraine or Zimbabwe, vtbc
Apr 7-13: Bausch & Lomb women's championships, Amelia Island, United States
Apr 14-20: ATP championship, Tokyo and Barcelona; Japan women's Open, Tokyo
Apr 21-27: Monte Carlo Open; Budapest women's Open, Danamon women's Open, Jakarta
Apr 28-May 3: Rexona women's Cup, Hamburg; Croatian women's Open, Bol
May 5-11: German Open, Hamburg; Italian women's Open, Rome
May 12-18: Italian Open, Rome; German women's Open, Berlin; Rover women's championships, Cardiff
May 19-25: ATP Tour world team championships; Spanish women's Open, Madrid; Strasbourg women's International
May 21-24: Women's world doubles cup, Edinburgh
May 26-June 8: French Open, Roland Garros, Paris
June 9-15: Stella Artois championships, Queen's Club; DFS women's Classic, Birmingham
June 16-21: Nottingham Open; Wilkinson women's championships, Rosmalen, Holland
June 17-21: Direct Line Insurance women's championships, Eastbourne
June 23-July 6: The All England Championships, Wimbledon
July 8-13: Bristol Challenger
July 12-13: Fed Cup semi-finals
July 14-20: ATP championship, Stuttgart and Washington; Czech women's Open, Karlovy Vary; Women's international, Palermo
July 21-25: LTA county cup, various venues
July 21-27: Bank of the West women's classic, Stanford, California; Warsaw women's cup
July 28-Aug 3: ATP Tour, Montreal; Toshiba women's classic, San Diego; Maria Lankowitz Open, Austria
Aug 4-10: ATP Tour, Cincinnati; Acura women's classic, Los Angeles
Aug 11-17: ATP championship, Indianapolis and New Haven; Du Maurier women's Open, Toronto; United States women's hardcourt championships, Atlanta
Aug 25-Sept 7: United States Open, Flushing Meadow, New York
Sept 8-13: NEC world youth cup
Sept 8-14: Bournemouth International open
Sept 15-21: Nichirei International women's championships, Tokyo
Sept 19-21: Davis Cup semi-finals; Davis Cup world group qualifying round
Sept 22-28: Wakefield women's International
Sept 23-28: Compaq Grand Slam Cup, Munich
Sept 29-Oct 4: Sparkassen women's cup, Filderstadt, Germany; Chinese women's Open, Peking
Oct 4-5: Fed Cup final
Oct 6-12: ATP championship, Vienna and Singapore; Porsche women's grand prix, Filderstadt
Oct 13-19: European women's indoor championships, Zurich
Oct 20-26: ATP Tour, Stuttgart; Bell women's challenge, Quebec City; Seat women's Open, Luxembourg
Oct 27-Nov 2: ATP Tour, Paris; Kremlin women's cup, Moscow
Nov 3-9: Ameritech women's cup, Chicago
Nov 10-16: ATP Tour world championships, Hanover; Advanta women's championships, Philadelphia
Nov 11-16: Guardian Direct national championships, Telford
Nov 17-23: ATP Tour world doubles championships; WTA Tour championships, New York; Volvo women's open, Pattaya City, Thailand
Nov 28-30: Davis Cup final

TRIATHLON

Mar 9: Ironman New Zealand, Auckland
Mar 16: European winter triathlon cup final, Mels, Italy
Apr 13: Ironman Australia, Forster/Tuncurry
May 17-18: European duathlon, Glogow, Poland
May 24: Ironman Lanzarote
June 1: World long-distance triathlon championships, Nice; World long-distance duathlon championships, Zofingen, Switzerland
June 14: Windsor triathlon
June 22: British triathlon championships, Ellesmere
June 28: Ironman Japan, Lake Biwa
July 5-6: European triathlon championships, Vuokatti, Finland
July 13: Scarborough triathlon; Ironman Europe, Roth, Germany
July 19: British middle-distance triathlon championships, Ironbridge
July 28: European club championships, Madine, France; Pembrokeshire Coast triathlon, Milford Haven
Aug 2-3: European long-distance triathlon championships, Denmark
Aug 3: Ironman Switzerland, Zurich
Aug 10: British team relay championships, Holme Pierrepont
Aug 17: International triathlon grand prix series event, Portsmouth
Aug 24: British duathlon championships, Swindon; Ironman Canada, Penticton
Aug 30: International triathlon grand prix, Portrush
Sept 6: Home International duathlon and Scottish duathlon championships, Dumfries
Sept 7: Bournemouth triathlon
Sept 13-14: World duathlon championships, Guernica, Spain
Sept 28: London triathlon
Oct 4: International triathlon grand prix, Honolulu
Oct 11: Ironman triathlon world championships, Kona, Hawaii
Oct 12: European duathlon cup final, Calais
Oct 23: European triathlon cup final, Alanya, Turkey
Nov 16: World triathlon championships, Perth, Australia

[illegible]

Feb 15-16: English Volleyball Association Student Cup finals, Leeds
Apr 5-6: English Cup finals, Sheffield
Apr 13: Royal Bank Scottish Cup finals, Edinburgh
May 10-11: EVA County Cup finals, Liverpool
May 16: City of Glasgow European Club tournament
June 14: Scottish Open, Perth

[illegible]

Mar 21-22: Home nations tournament, Sheffield
Mar 28-31: Home nations tournament, Millfield School
May 17: Championship finals, Walsall
May 23-25: Four nations tournament, Glasgow
Aug 13-24: European championships, Seville

[illegible]

July 19-20: National championships, vtbc
July 24-27: European championships, Greece
Aug 2-3: National youth championships, vtbc
Aug 16-17: National senior championships, vtbc
Aug 30-31: British masters, vtbc
Sept 20-21: World championships, Colombia

[illegible]

Feb 15-16: British powerlifting championships, Birmingham
May 7-11: European powerlifting championships, Birmingham
May 12-19: European weightlifting championships, Croatia
May 20-31: World junior men and women's weightlifting championships, Cape Town
June 22-29: European junior men and senior women's weightlifting championships, Sevilla
July 5: British weightlifting championships, Bristol
Dec 5-14: World weightlifting championships, Changmai, Thailand

[illegible]

Mar 28-31: National racing championships, first round, Marazion
Apr 12-13: National racing championships, second round, Hayling Island
Apr 26-27: National racing championships, third round, Fevensey
May 3-5: National boardsailing championships
May 10-11: National racing championships, fourth round, Cold Knapp, Cardiff
May 24-26: National racing championships, fifth round, Howe
June 28-29: National racing championships, sixth round, Climping
Aug 9-10: National racing championships, seventh round, Teesside
Aug 23-25: National racing championships, eighth round, Allonby
Sept 6-7: National boardsailing championships
Sept 13-14: Youth and masters national championships, Weymouth
Sept 20-21: National racing championships, ninth round, Clacton
Oct 17-18: National racing championships, final round, Poole
Oct 25-26: Inland national boardsailing championships, Grafham Water

[illegible]

Apr 4-5: Freestyle World Cup, Denver
Apr 19: Scottish Open freestyle championships, venue to be announced
May 7-10: European freestyle championships, Warsaw
May 22-25: European Greco-Roman championships, Kouvola, Finland
June 1: British Open freestyle championships, venue to be announced
July 5-6: Challenge Cup of Great Britain, Manchester
July 8-12: Women's world freestyle championships, Clermont-Ferrand, France
Aug 9-19: World junior championships, Turku, Finland
Aug 28-Sept 1: World freestyle championships, Krasnoyarsk, Russia
Sept 10-13: World Greco-Roman championships, Wroclaw, Poland
Sept 20: English Open championships, venue to be announced
Nov 12-14: Greco-Roman World Cup, Tehran

Lions no longer big game in Africa

David Hands, rugby correspondent, looks at the chances of an endangered species seeking success in a hostile environment

When André Markgraaff, the South Africa coach, left Great Britain last month at the conclusion of his team's tour to Argentina, France and Wales, there was a grim smile on his face. 1996 had been a hell of a year, it seemed to say, but 1997 was going to be different.

Markgraaff believes that the team that he developed during that tour will start bearing fruit when the British Isles arrive in May for their first tour to South Africa since Bill Beaumont's 1980 team promised much, yet fell by the wayside to a 3-1 series defeat.

The gap in the long-running series, of course, was created by the existence in South Africa of the apartheid regime, which was toppled only in 1992. The Lions were due to visit in 1986 but, diplomatically, no formal invitation to tour was ever forthcoming from the late Danie Craven, then president of the South African Rugby Board. Australia filled the Lions' void in 1989 and their last tour — again ultimately unsuccessful — was the 2-1 series defeat to New Zealand in 1993.

The common thread running from 1989, through 1993 and so to this year is Ian McGeechan. His appointment as coach for a second time in New Zealand was unique and the opportunity to do so for a third time will surely remain unparalleled. Bearing in mind that he was also a key playing member of the 1974 Lions, who made their invincible way through South Africa under the leadership of Willie John McBride, McGeechan's value to a threatened species needs no embellishment.

That the Lions are threatened is no secret. The prolonged spat over television rights last year that threatened the continuation of the five nations' championship in its present form demonstrated the potential for division that exists in the increasingly nationalistic world of rugby. Ironically it is the southern-hemisphere countries who may ensure the continuation of tours, partly because of the Lions' strong history and partly as variation to the diet of tri-nations (South Africa, New Zealand and Australia) fare.

Yet the southern-hemisphere nations have ample reason for regarding the British as second-class rugby citizens. Playing standards have yet to advance sufficiently to catch up with the strong provincial teams that exists in the south and the muddled approach to professionalism, notably in England, has earned few plaudits from down under.

Thus the dice are stacked against the Lions in the country where even New Zealand have found success so elusive. Markgraaff, you imagine, perceives the Lions as a tasty *hors d'oeuvre* before the tri-nations series, the only doubt in his mind being the potential for injuries to his own players in the demanding Super 12 series in April and May.

Just to ensure that the Lions have been well and truly softened up before the first of the three internationals, in Cape Town in June 21, the programme gives them three matches in succession against the most successful provinces in the country: on June 7 they play the famous Blue Bulls of Northern Transvaal in Pretoria, four days later they meet Transvaal in Johannesburg and on June 14 they meet Natal, the victors over Transvaal in the Currie Cup final last year, in Durban.

Just to round off a hectic fortnight, the intervening match before the internationals begin is against the Emerging Springboks, whose likely quality can be judged by the calibre of players who toured Britain with South Africa A during the past two months. It will therefore be of primary importance that McGeechan's midweek team performs as effectively as their counterparts of 1974 — as distinct from those of 1993 in New Zealand, who fell apart.

The pre-Christmas internationals have confirmed certain obvious candidates for the Lions party. Robert Howley, the Wales scrum half who enjoyed such a good game against South Africa last month, will surely be first choice in his position, with Gregor Townsend, of Scotland, as his likely partner. Since Townsend is also the Scotland captain, he must be a candidate for that role, though his comparative youth may tell against him in a job that demands an ability to cut across national divisions.

A year ago Rob Wainwright, the Scotland flanker, looked an odds-on prospect as captain, but he has not played this season and may struggle to make the tour party. Phil de Glanville, of England, possesses the necessary maturity but, again, is by no means a cast-iron certainty to be a first-choice Lions centre and that, above all, is the prime requisite for the tour leader.

BOB THOMAS

Beaumont was the last British Isles captain in South Africa, when his team lost the series 3-1

Townsend: potential leader

Compiled by Robert Hands

هكذا من الأصل

John Hopkins looks back at a remarkable year for a golfer whose best is still to come

Future burning bright for Tiger — the chosen one

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

William Blake

No career burnt brighter at such a tender age than that of Tiger Woods, the prodigious golfer, who celebrated his 21st birthday on Monday and flew from his million dollar home in Florida to spend it among the blackjack tables and fruit machines of Las Vegas. "Tiger wanted to make his birthday an occasion to remember rather than just have a dinner with his parents or some such," a member of his management team said. "So he went to Vegas with some schoolfriends to do some gambling."

Though he has come of age for little more than 48 hours, Woods already finds himself in a position in golf that has not been matched since the emergence of Jack Nicklaus, at almost the same age, 35 years ago, and Arnold Palmer before that. Indeed, Woods has exceeded those two icons in the success that he has had since August 27 when, in a 13-word statement, he confirmed that he had turned professional. Perhaps one has to go back to 1930, when Bobby Jones, the legendary amateur, won the Open and Amateur titles of the United States and Great Britain in one dizzy spell, to find a golfing phenomenon of similar proportions.

Nobody has made such a professional debut as Woods, who finished among the leading five players in five consecutive tournament, something that no rookie had done before him. The fact is that Woods, whose father is a native American and mother a Thai, has taken the game away from being the sole domain of a middle-class, country club, predominantly white constituency and caused it to enter the consciousness of a far wider audience than ever before. If there was any doubt about this, then consider this: Michael Jordan, the basketball player, declared that Woods was his biggest hero on earth.

Sport in the United States is best chronicled by *Sports Illustrated*, the authoritative weekly magazine. When *Sports Illustrated* requests a round of golf with the President, be it Bush or Clinton, it gets it. Late last month it added the gilt to the gingerbread of Woods's recent life by naming him as its sportsman of the year.

In doing this, it was acknowledging the remarkable interest generated in Woods since he won his third successive US Amateur, his sixth United States Golf Association title in all, in mid-August. It began when he signed contracts worth $60 million over five years, excluding bonuses, with Nike, the sportswear company, and Titleist, the golf ball manufacturer. "Eight million dollars a year! That's over three times what Greg Norman gets," Hughes Norton, Woods's manager, is alleged to have said when outlining the terms of the Nike deal to his client.

There was no lessening of interest in Woods when 21 of his first 27 rounds as a professional were in the 60s, contributing to him making the fastest jump into the world's top 50 golfers ever. Then, just to cap it all, Woods won two of his first eight tournaments, winning $740,000 (about £450,000). Golf, they say, is a game of inches. Here was a young man roaring ahead in leaps and bounds. It was unheard of.

When the stars threw down their spears
And watered heaven with their tears:
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

"The interest in Tiger has been greater than in any client we have ever had," Bev Norwood, vice-president, golf publishing, at the International Management Group, said. "He has received requests to be on the covers of seven non-sports magazines. His interview requests have slowed down now to about 20 each week. All the major television networks have requested him. The Bill Cosby sitcom show would write an episode around Tiger if he would agree to appear in it. If we had wanted to, I could have filled every working day since he turned pro with interviews with journalists, appearances on chat shows and situation comedies and the like."

After the success that Woods has had these past three months, Nicklaus's observation at the US Masters last year, to the effect that Woods could win more Masters than he and Palmer combined, no longer sounds exaggerated.

At times, Woods's parents say things that jar on the ears of others, specially other parents. "Tiger has Thai, African, Chinese, American, Indian and European blood," Tida, his mother, said. "He can hold everyone together. He is the Universal Child." In this extravagant claim, she is backed up by Buddhist monks in Los Angeles and Thailand who, after reading Tiger's astrological charts, said: "Tiger has wondrous powers. If he becomes a politician, he will be either a president or a prime minister. If he enters the military, he will be a general."

'If he becomes a politician, he will be either a president or a prime minister'

In an article in Sports Illustrated, Earl Woods is quoted as saying about his son: "Tiger is the Chosen One. He'll have the power to impact nations. Not people, nations. The world is just getting a taste of his power."

This would sound frightening, were it not for two facts. First, that Woods is a phenomenon, as we have seen; secondly, that he carries such sentiments with obvious ease. "I don't see any of this as scary or a burden," Tiger said in the same article. "I have always known where I wanted to go in life. I've never let anything deter me. This is my purpose. It will unfold."

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright,
In the forests of the night;
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

At 21, Woods has taken the world of golf by storm and captured the imagination of enthusiasts in a way not seen since the emergence of the great Nicklaus

Rolling back the years to a world of difference

SIMON BARNES

Midweek View

Sport is real life on fast-forward. I have often said this; now I propose to prove it. For, in sport, everything is exaggerated, often to absurd levels: stratospheric elation and cataclysmic dejection. Triumph and disaster dance hand-in-hand to the music of sport; equanimity is the eternal wallflower as the endless gavotte of sport continues.

Real history unwinds at a leisurely rate in world affairs. Even in such allegedly frenetic matters as party politics, the march toward denouement takes place in slow motion. A week may be a long time in politics, but half a second is an eternity to an athlete in competition.

In family life, generation succeeds generation in units of about 30 years; but, in sport, entire dynasties grow, reign, subside into decadence, crash and plummet, and the entire cycle takes no more than a few years. Heroes come and go like mayflies. A year passes in sport and all is different; a decade and the entire landscape has changed.

So, with a cat-scattering thump, the essential reference book for all enthusiasts of the sporting round lands on the doormat: the *Sports Yearbook 1997**, the omnisport *Wisden*. This book has existed in various forms under various sponsors for not quite a decade and, in order to prove my fast-forward thesis, I turned back to the first one.

It was published as *The Sportspages Almanac 1990*, under the editorship of Matthew Engel, who now edits, with some style, the single-sport *Wisden*. It tells of sport's 1989, so let us examine, as we enter a new year, a gap of eight years. Eight years: a political season, an historical moment, a geological nanosecond, a sporting eternity.

Eight years: another country — they do things differently there. Survey it: the sporting landscape is not just changed, it is virtually unrecognisable. Endless seismic upheavals have erected entire mountain ranges, demolished continents, emptied oceans, flooded entire nations.

Let us start with football, and the day on which the domestic game changed forever. This was April 15, 1989, and a day that needs no more description than a single word: Hillsborough. The Taylor report, expected to change nothing, was produced in its wake.

The year was also the beginning of the end of the Liverpool dynasty. The first division, which was in those days the first division, was won by Arsenal. Manchester United finished eleventh and Newcastle United were bottom. The politically-motivated debate on identity cards for supporters continued. Football was haunted by disaster, hag-ridden by violence, a game descending into contempt and poverty.

'Everything that was set in stone in 1989 has crumbled away'

English cricket, however, began its summer filled with the brightest optimism. Most expected considerable success in the Ashes series under David Gower; but it turned out to be the beginning of the downward spiral into a national joke. England lost 4-0 to Australia, Gower was duly dumped at the end of it all and Ian Botham was not picked for the winter tour, a decision that he described as "macabre". The West Indians, meanwhile, were unbeatable.

The Dubin inquiry looked into Ben Johnson and the drugs business. Steve Ovett, still a leading athlete, burst into tears on television. Mike Tyson would never be beaten. Desert Orchid won the Cheltenham Gold Cup and Nashwan was, briefly, the horse of the century.

The England rugby team made the first moves in a climb away from the status of national joke, and they did better than expected in the five nations' championship. All the same, France won the title more or less as a matter of routine, and for the fourth year running. Who could ever think of stopping them? Rugby league was a winter game and Widnes won the championship.

Snooker was still sexy and Steve Davis won the world championship for the third year running. Ivan Lendl was the world's No 1 tennis player, though Boris Becker won Wimbedon. Steffi Graf, winning Wimbledon for the second time, looked rather promising; Chris Evert retired with 157 tournament victories. A decent English tennis player? No chance.

Meanwhile, Alain Prost whinged his way to the Formula One world drivers' championship, but everyone knew that Ayrton Senna, who came second, had an extra dimension to his skills. The year was surely just a blip in his personal pattern: history was his for the taking.

Eight years in sport, and not so much a changed as a different world. Everything that was set in stone in 1989 has crumbled: one eternal order has succeeded the next in the twinkling of an eye.

Everything that seems most solid, settled and certain in sport today will change, and change soon, for that is sport's nature. Henman, Cantona, Shearer, Hill, Dettori, Faldo: enjoy it while you can, for sporting lease has all too short a date.

Sport is extreme, crazed, wild, miserable, delightful, absurd and gone in a flash. Rather like your own youth.

**The BBC Radio 5 Sports Yearbook 1997*, edited by Peter Nichols, published by Oddball, price £12.99.

BOWLS

New body defended by Corsie

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

WITH the world's leading lawn and carpet bowlers poised to take control of the professional side of their sport, Richard Corsie, the chairman of the Professional Bowls Association (PBA), was keen yesterday to play down suggestions that the game could fall victim to player power.

The PBA's new company, the World Bowls Tour Limited (WBT), which is launched today, will look after bowls at its highest level, and will replace the World Indoor Bowls Council (WIBC) as the sport's leading organising body once the Saga world indoor championships are over this month.

"We are not a breakaway group," Corsie, who has won the world title three times, said. "We have consulted with the sport's governing bodies — the World Bowls Board and the WIBC — at every stage. We invited them to sit on our board — an offer which they have so far declined.

"Our initiative will unify the sport at top level, so that we can speak with one voice, and make a more professional impact with sponsors and television companies. It represents the most exciting and significant development in our game since Sir Francis Drake's famous dalliance on Plymouth Hoe. Everyone will benefit — at every level of the sport."

The WBT has pledged to give its "full support and co-operation" to the WIBC in the promoting of the 1997 world championships at Preston this month; and the WIBC, in handing over the reins to the players, has, in its turn, promised "full support and co-operation" to the tour for the four remaining events on the present BBC contract.

The quiet revolution sees players taking a leading role in the game without the traumas seen in other sports. Corsie said: "We created the WBT in order to achieve our goals for more television, more sponsorship, and more events — because we want more opportunities for our members as professionals."

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This signalling problem occurred in the 1995 Bermuda Bowl.

Dealer West | Love all | IMPs

North: ♠95 ♥Q9876 ♦J43 ♣KQ3

West: ♠AKJ864 ♥53 ♦A72 ♣42

East: ♠Q1073 ♥42 ♦KQ9865 ♣5

South: ♠2 ♥AKJ10 ♦10 ♣AJ109876

W	N	E	S
1 S	Pass	4 S	5 C
Pass	Pass	5 D	Pass
5 S	6 C	Pass	Pass
Double	All Pass		

Contract: Six Clubs doubled, by South — Lead: Ace of diamonds

When West (Chris Convery, playing for South Africa) could not double Five Clubs, East (Craig Gower) correctly decided to bid on and, to ensure the best lead against Six Clubs, he bid Five Diamonds. On the ace of diamonds, Gower played the nine. Now Convery was afraid that the ace of spades would not stand up (after all, East was quite likely to have five spades to continue bidding over Five Clubs), and so continued diamonds. Declarer ruffed and, after drawing trumps, got his losing spade away on the long hearts.

There was a lot of discussion of East's correct card. Zia Mahmood plays that, in high-level signalling situations, a high card encourages and a low card discourages. Furthermore, an odd card shows an odd number and an even card an even number in the suit. So he would play the eight from East's diamond holding. All very well in theory, but on another occasion East's diamonds might be KQ9532, and now how could he both encourage and show his length? Anyway, even if West knows that East has an even number of diamonds, it might be correct for him to continue in case East had only four.

I think Ronnie Rubin's suggestion was the best. East can see that a spade is likely to stand up as, with seven spades, West might have bid immediately over Five Clubs. Hence East should play the queen of diamonds on the ace. As that technically denies the king, it forces West to try spades.

Year end congress

The Swiss teams at the year end congress was won on a split tie by Barnet and Maggie Shenkin, Victor Silverstone and Gerald Haase; second were Akram Zaman, Peter Edelman, Malcolm Pryor and Tony Eastgate.

☐ Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Reverse hat-trick

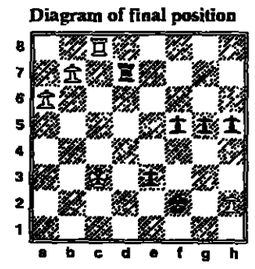
Michael Adams, the pre-tournament favourite at Hastings, has caused a sensation by losing his first three games. In the third round he went down to Eduard Rozentalis in a sharp variation of the Caro-Kann. Xie Jun (the former women's world champion, from China), the early leader, was toppled by Stuart Conquest. Hebden and Rozentalis now share the lead on 2½/3.

White: Eduard Rozentalis
Black: Michael Adams
Hastings, December 1996

Caro-Kann Defence

1	e4	c6
2	d4	d5
3	exd5	cxd5
4	c4	Nf6
5	Nc3	Nc6
6	Nf3	Bg4
7	cxd5	Nxd5
8	Qb3	Nb6
9	d5	Bxf3
10	gxf3	Nd4
11	Bb5+	Nxb5
12	Nxb5	a6
13	Nc3	Nd7
14	Qxb7	g6
15	0-0	Bg7
16	Re1	0-0
17	Bg5	Bf6
18	Bxf6	exf6
19	d6	Rb8
20	Qc7	Ne5
21	Re3	Rc8
22	Qxd8	Rfxd8
23	Rd1	Rc6
24	Ne4	Kg7
25	b4	Nd7
26	Rc3	Rb6
27	a3	f5
28	Nc5	Nf8
29	d7	Kf6
30	Ne4	Re6
31	Rc7	Ke7
32	Nc5	Rb6
33	Ra7	Ne6
34	Re1	Kf6
35	Nxa6	Rd6
36	Rxe6+	fxe6
37	Nc5	Rb6
38	Kf1	g5
39	Ke2	h5
40	Kd3	Rd6+
41	Kc3	Ke5
42	Rc7	Kf4
43	Rc8	R8xd7
44	Nxd7	Rxd7
45	b5	Kxf3
46	b6	Kxf2
47	a4	e5
48	a5	e4
49	a6	e3
50	b7	Black resigns

Diagram of final position



Short's triumph

Nigel Short, Great Britain's top-ranked grandmaster, has won the powerful Koop Tjuchem tournament in Groningen, Holland, coming ahead of a field that included many of the world's leading players.

Chess information

The Groningen web site, which contains all the games with notes, can be accessed on http://www.noord.bART.nl/ssg/groningl.htm.

Times book

The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 chess puzzles from international grandmaster Raymond Keene's daily column in *The Times*, and is available now from bookshops or from B. T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01376 321276 at £6.99 plus postage and packing).

☐ Raymond Keene writes Monday to Friday in Sport and in Weekend on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

CHAMPART
a. A kind of lease
b. Half of a meadow
c. Field sketching

COWAN
a. A milkmaid
b. A mountain ash
c. A wall-builder

CLASTIC
a. Inelastic
b. Tending to tears
c. Broken rocks

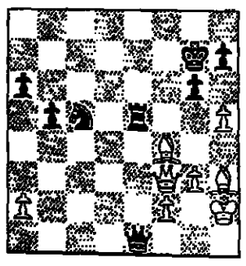
CONIROSTER
a. A rabbit census
b. A bird
c. Cock-crow

Answers on page 37

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Lubbers — Rostand, Holland, 1956. White can regain his sacrificed exchange (rook for minor piece) with 1. Bxe5+. However, he can do better. Can you see how?



Solution on page 37

McGeechan dreams of taking Lions to higher plane

David Hands suggests that players' performances for their clubs as well as countries may hold the key to selection for the British Isles touring team

There have been 11 internationals involving the home unions in the pre-Christmas period (if you include England's meeting with the New Zealand Barbarians in that category) and it is no great reflection on British or Irish rugby that the most encouraging of them could be perceived as the 37-20 defeat that South Africa inflicted upon Wales.

That, at any rate, is the view of Ian McGeechan, who, next summer, will take the best 35 players from these islands to play South Africa. McGeechan, the coach for the third successive time to the British Isles team, might reasonably have hoped to have pencilled in half his tour party, but now he must look to the five nations' championship for more positive food for thought.

However, the Lions selectors will be noting club form as well as that of the various countries, and that is where McGeechan has found most of his encouragement at the halfway point of the British season. The open-minded conjunction of players, coaches and referees has offered a potent mixture in the English first division, not all of it sufficiently meaningful, but indicative of a changing attitude.

McGeechan perceives three distinct stages for the leading British players: the attitude adopted in domestic rugby, the creation of a more expansive game by the national teams, leading to the highest level of all — the Lions, whom McGeechan takes to be one of the top three sides in the world, with New Zealand and South Africa.

McGeechan: optimistic

"That is how the Lions are regarded in South Africa," he said, "and that is the challenge for us next summer.

"The Lions are bigger overseas than any national team and, for that reason, they are more important now than they have ever been for the tactical development of our top players. We keep talking about different levels and more competitions here, but, though it may be only a small group of players, there is still some value in having a Lions test at home each season, to represent the highest possible level British players can aspire to."

McGeechan leaves no room for doubt over the significance with which he regards the Lions concept, yet he is enough of a realist to know that results on the field have to reflect the worth of that concept. In 1989 his Lions beat Australia 2-1, in 1993 they lost by the same margin to New Zealand; the forthcoming series in South Africa, you might say, will be the defining one.

McGeechan, though, has looked in vain at the international stage for the tactical ambition that will be required to beat South Africa. "We won't win there by playing a tight game or a short game," he said. "We have to match them in the tight areas, but we have to remain as flexible as we can, to make them work. That's where New Zealand adapted so well last summer: they didn't beat South Africa in the scrums, but that area didn't become an Achilles' heel and that will be the key for us.

"The most encouraging feature of our pre-Christmas international programme was probably Wales's match with South Africa. Although technically Wales weren't good enough to achieve what they set out to do, they were trying to create positions they could play from.

"There has been no criticism of England in those set-piece areas over the past few seasons, but it's what happens afterwards that matters, at the breakdown, the movement of players around the breakdown and from it. England have had difficulty in changing. They tend to be the most structured of sides, but, in South Africa, once the set-pieces are right, we will want to destructure the game and produce fluid situations. I hope we will see this evolving in the five nations', see more happening away from the set-pieces, quality decision-making and quality play."

That is an optimistic outlook, given the introverted nature of the five nations' and the limited experience of many of those who will be playing in it, but McGeechan would rather have glorious failure than win a restricted series by the odd penalty goal.

That is necessary both for the development of his players as all-rounders and for the wellbeing of the international game. It may be anathema to national coaches, but the Lions selectors will not object to the home unions losing games in the five nations' championship, so long as they are seen to be striving for the ideal.

"There are a number of players who have done themselves no harm by the way they are playing at club level," McGeechan said. Though he will not name names at this juncture, he will have been heartened by the consistency, month by month and year by year, of players such as Martin Johnson, the Leicester lock, who has shown that he has the mentality to battle through a tour itinerary that McGeechan describes as the equivalent of ten five nations' games and three World Cup finals.

Johnson: consistent

The odd outstanding five nations' appearance will not do. Potential Lions must be able to call up outstanding form on each of the four weekends if they are to be in the roll-call by the end of March. Some of the pieces seem already to be in place: Robert Howley, of Wales, must have booked one of the scrum half berths, Gregor Townsend, of Scotland, one of those at stand-off half, while Keith Wood, the Ireland captain, is a frontrunner for a hooking spot.

Genuine quality, however, is thin. If England, through weight of playing numbers, expect to provide the core of the side, they will have to improve on form so far. The five nations' is frequently the making of Scotland, while Ireland, against Italy on Saturday, and Wales, against the United States on January 11, have yet more preparation before the opening weekend of the championship, on January 18. If McGeechan has his fingers crossed at this stage, who could blame him?

RUGBY LEAGUE

Lydon ends period of distinction at Wigan

By Christopher Irvine

ON THE field, in the dressing-room and, latterly, in the office at Central Park, in his role as football manager at Wigan, Joe Lydon was an inspirational figure and the consummate professional. His decision to leave yesterday was not easy after an 11-year association with the club.

Lydon's time at Wigan covered the most successful period in the club's history. As player, assistant coach and manager, Lydon's input was always significant and his resignation, tended at the expiry of his present contract, was accepted reluctantly after lengthy discussions with Jack Robinson, the Wigan chairman.

"It's been very amicable, something we talked about for a while," Lydon said. "I just needed to take a step away from Wigan and from rugby league for a few weeks to consider my options."

Interest has been shown by several rugby union clubs in Lydon. He helped to coach the North division last season. His farewell appearance for Wigan was at Twickenham last May in the second cross-code match against Bath. Nonetheless, his future is thought to lie in league, possibly at Leeds in succession to Hugh McGahan as football manager.

The second challenge match at St Helens today — weather permitting — will be the first Lydon has played no part in since he signed for Wigan from Widnes, in 1986, and became league's first £100,000 transfer. He won every domestic honour and made 30 appearances for Great Britain. Speed was his prime asset, and accounted for two of the best tries seen at Wembley, in the 1984 Challenge Cup final for Widnes against Wigan.

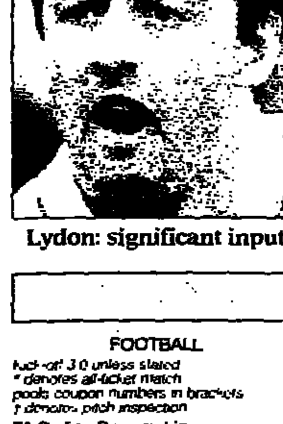
Robinson praised Lydon's ambassadorial qualities and regretted his departure. The football manager's post set up for Lydon will remain unfilled. "I am proud to have played my part as player, coach and manager at a club that has gained so much success," Lydon said.

A youthful Wigan side is again at half-strength for the return fixture at St Helens. The Knowsley Road pitch is subject to a further inspection at 9am. The surface was deemed playable yesterday and is covered by protective sheeting. Conditions overnight will dictate whether the match goes ahead. Heavy snow yesterday accounted for the other matches scheduled for today, at Keighley and Dewsbury, which have been rearranged for Sunday.

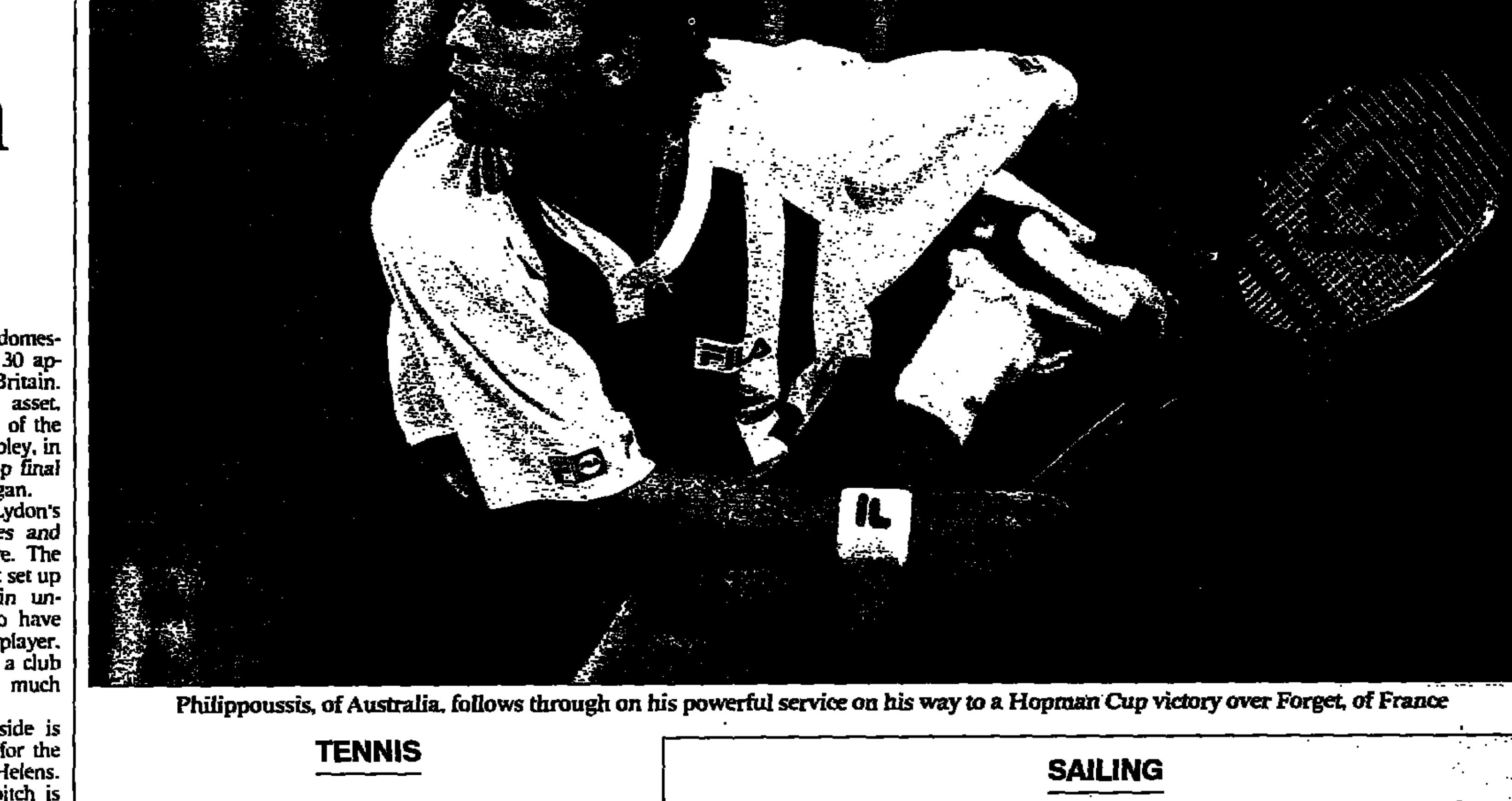
Nigel Wright, who missed Wigan's 32-22 win in the first leg, last Thursday, is over his flu and is on the substitutes' bench. He is the one change to Wigan's line-up. Kris Radlinski, scorer of three tries in the first match, Stephen Holgate, Daryl Cardiss and Gael Tallec have all recovered from minor injuries.

Bobbie Goulding's return from a back injury gives added substance to a strong St Helens back line. His partner at half back is Paul Anderson, normally a forward, whose full debut follows the big impact that he made on the recent Great Britain Academy tour of New Zealand. The versatile Andy Northey fills in at hooker for the first time, as Keiron Cunningham is still sidelined after a knee operation.

Leeds, who this week completed their six-strong overseas player quota, have acquired Rudi Meir, an Australian skills coach, who is joining them on a six-month secondment from Southern Cross University. He had a short spell at Wigan during 1995.



Lydon: significant input



Philippoussis, of Australia, follows through on his powerful service on his way to a Hopman Cup victory over Forget, of France

TENNIS

El Sawy is next in line for Henman

By Our Sports Staff

TIM HENMAN, the leading British player, must believe that fortune is on his side, for he has begun his 1997 campaign on a gentle note. Having beaten Herbert Wiltschnig, an Austrian qualifier, 6-3, 6-2 in the first round of the Qatar Open yesterday, Henman now has to meet another qualifier, Tamer El Sawy, the Egyptian No 1, in the second round today.

Henman beat El Sawy 6-7, 6-2, 6-2 in a dead Davis Cup rubber at Wimbledon on grass in September and, if he repeats that win on the Qatar hard courts, he will go through to the quarter-finals without meeting a player who received direct entry into the main draw.

Although El Sawy is ranked only No 149 in the world, as against Henman's No 29, he was good enough to beat Jan Siemerink, of Holland, the No 3 seed who is No 15 in the world, 6-3, 6-7, 7-6 in the first round.

Earlier, El Sawy had beaten Jamie Delgado, of Great Britain, Henman's great friend and former doubles partner, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 in the final qualifying round.

Michael Stich, the former Wimbledon champion, playing his first match since he was beaten by Henman in the first round of the Grand Slam Cup in Munich last month, lost to Sergi Bruguera, of Spain, 6-3, 6-1 yesterday and described the defeat as the worst match he had played in a decade.

Thomas Muster, of Austria, the No 1 seed, reached the second round with a 7-5, 6-4 win over Hernan Gumy, of Argentina, and Petr Korda, of the Czech Republic, the defending champion, had a 6-1, 6-2 victory over Stephane Simian, of France.

Mark Philippoussis unleashed 37 aces as he completed successive singles and doubles victories yesterday to lift Australia to a 2-1 win over France, the No 4 seeds, in the Hopman Cup mixed teams' championship at the Burswood Dome in Perth.

Philippoussis defeated Guy Forget 7-6, 6-2 in the men's singles and then combined with the veteran, Nicole Bradtke, to win a tense mixed doubles 7-6, 7-6 against Forget and Mary Pierce. France had earlier taken the lead when Pierce beat Bradtke 7-6, 6-1 in the women's singles.

SAILING

Blyth believes Challenge fleet has split into two divisions

By Edward Gorman, Sailing Correspondent

THE BT Global Challenge fleet has now sailed the best part of 12,000 miles over two legs to New Zealand. There are still 20,000 more miles to sail before the race is won, yet the class acts in the field have already asserted themselves.

The top boats, which arrived in Wellington at the head of the fleet on Monday, are *Group 4*, under Mike Golding, *Toshiba Wave Warrior*, under Simon Walker, the race's youngest skipper, and *Save The Children*, under the command of Andy Hindley, the former training skipper for crew volunteers in the race.

Those three have achieved remarkably close overall times for the two legs and have drawn well away from Mark Lodge's *Motorola*, the next boat. When times for both legs are taken together, Golding has a 16-hour advantage over Walker, who, in turn, has just five hours over Hindley. Then there is a biggish gap to Lodge, who is 36 hours behind Hindley and 57 adrift of Golding.

Lodge can expect his time to be improved somewhat after redress is awarded for time taken refuelling the dismasted *Concert*. There is no doubt that, had she not been dismasted and demoted to the back of the fleet for the second leg, *Concert* would also be in the top echelon.

"There are two bunches," Chay Blyth, the race director said, "the ones who want to race and the ones who want to get round. The ones who want to race are very competitive. I think it might change on the next leg [1,500 miles from Wellington to Sydney] because it will be a bit of a sprint and the backmarkers will probably stay with the leaders."

Latest positions 24

Blyth is thrilled by the closeness of the racing at the front of the fleet and argues that his volunteers should be taken more seriously by many in the racing fraternity in Great Britain.

"If you look at *Save The Children* and *Group 4*, for example," he said, "they actually crossed tacks at the waypoint right in the middle of the ocean. The racing is hard and very competitive. I think the word 'amateur' in this context has to be redefined."

Motorola was the first of three finishers yesterday, in fourth place for the leg. Nine hours after her, *Global Teamwork* got in after a frustrating wait for a breeze, followed by *Commercial Union*, whose crew quickly joined in the huge New Year's Eve party under way at Queen's Wharf.

For Kit Harrison, 23, a crew member on *Teamwork*, the last day racing into Wellington and the arrival in Lambton Harbour have been the highlight of the race so far.

"Racing down the coast, we were in tune as never before," he said. "Every manoeuvre worked fantastically well. As soon as we docked, we were handed a crate of beer, steak sandwiches, fish and chips, fresh fruit and strawberries."

The backmarkers, meanwhile, were feeling the after-effects of hurricane Fergus, with *Time & Tide*, *3Com*, *Courtaulds International* and *Heath Insured II* reporting horrendous conditions. The disabled crew on *Time & Tide* were beating into 56 knots of wind with waves sweeping the deck and the cockpit flooding regularly.

RUGBY UNION

Ashton and Bath yet to resolve differences

By David Hands
Rugby Correspondent

BATH players will start the new year as they finished the old — uncertain about the future of Brian Ashton, their chief coach. The league game with Saracens on Saturday will be the third weekend since Ashton's future with the club was called into question, though yesterday there were further discussions involving him and Tony Swift, the club chairman.

"We are hoping the situation will be resolved in the very near future," Swift — a pupil of Ashton's when both were living in the North West — said last night.

Bath must hope to arrive at a position where they can harness Ashton's considerable coaching talents and the organisational qualities that John Hall has brought, as team manager and subsequently as director of rugby.

There are said to have been differences of opinion between the men which have led to the present impasse; meanwhile, Andy Robinson, helped by Ged Roddy, has been preparing the team which, against Saracens, remains without the injured Mike Catt.

David Young, the Wales prop, will miss Cardiff's Heineken Cup semi-final with Brive on Sunday and, in all probability, the international with the United States in Cardiff on January 11, the team for which will be named tomorrow. Young damaged a shoulder against South Africa last month.

With two other international props available — Andrew Lewis and Lyndon Mustoe — Cardiff should not go shorthanded to France. Mustoe has withdrawn from the game today at the Arms Park between Emerging Wales and a United States XV, who, if the bitter weather continues, are likely to play all four of their tour matches in Cardiff, where undersoil heating offers insurance against the weather.

That is one of the main headaches for the Heineken Cup organisers, who cannot afford any postponement. They have asked Leicester and Brive, the host clubs this weekend, to ensure that they have adequate pitch covering and hot-air blowers available so that the games can go ahead. Leicester, where there was heavy snow yesterday, will install heating today and are optimistic that their semi-final with Toulouse will proceed.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated
** denotes all-ticket match*
pools coupon numbers in brackets
† denotes pitch inspection

FA Carling Premiership

(1) Arsenal v Middlesbrough
(2) Chelsea v Liverpool
(3) Coventry v Sunderland
(4) Derby v Sheffield Wed P
(-) Everton v Blackburn (5.45)
(5) Leicester v Tottenham P
(-) Manchester Utd v Aston Villa (8.0)
(6) Newcastle v Leeds
(7) Southampton v Wimbledon
(8) West Ham v Nottingham Forest

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	21	12	6	3	38	19	42
Man Utd	20	10	7	3	42	25	37
Arsenal	20	10	7	3	37	20	37
Wimbledon	19	11	4	4	33	23	37
Newcastle	20	10	4	6	35	22	34
Aston Villa	20	10	4	6	29	19	34
Chelsea	20	8	8	4	32	29	32
Everton	20	7	7	6	29	27	28
Sheff Wed	20	6	10	4	21	22	28
Tottenham	20	8	4	8	22	26	28
Derby	20	5	8	7	20	25	23
Leicester	20	6	5	9	20	27	23
Sunderland	20	6	5	9	19	28	23
Coventry	20	5	7	8	20	25	22
Leeds	20	6	4	10	16	24	22
West Ham	19	5	6	8	18	25	21
Middlesbrough	20	4	6	10	25	38	18
Blackburn	19	3	8	8	17	22	17
Southampton	20	4	4	12	28	37	16
Nottm Forest	20	2	8	10	18	36	14

FAI HARP LAGER LEAGUE CUP: Final, second leg: Cork v Galway (1.30)

Nationwide League
First division

(9) Barnsley v Oldham P
(10) Birmingham v Manchester City
(11) Bolton v Bradford
(12) Charlton v Ipswich
(13) Crystal Palace v Reading P
(14) Huddersfield v Stoke †
(15) Norwich v Portsmouth
(16) Oxford Utd v Grimsby P
(17) Port Vale v Southend P
(18) Sheffield Utd v Wolverhampton P
(19) Swindon v QPR P
(20) West Bromwich v Tranmere †

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bolton	26	13	10	3	53	36	49
Barnsley	25	13	8	4	44	27	47
Sheff Utd	26	13	7	6	44	28	46
Wolvrhmptn	25	11	7	7	34	23	40
Crystal Palace	25	10	9	6	49	27	39
Oxford Utd	26	10	7	9	37	29	37
QPR	26	10	7	9	35	35	37
Stoke	23	10	7	6	31	31	37
Port Vale	26	9	10	7	29	26	37
Norwich	25	10	6	9	34	36	36
West Brom	25	7	12	6	42	40	33
Swindon	25	10	3	12	35	32	33
Ipswich	26	8	9	9	33	37	33
Tranmere	25	9	6	10	32	32	33
Portsmouth	26	9	6	11	30	31	33
Charlton	25	10	3	12	26	33	33
Birmingham	23	8	9	6	24	22	33
Huddersfield	26	8	8	10	30	34	32
Reading	26	7	8	11	28	37	29
Oldham	25	6	9	10	28	31	27
Man City	25	8	2	15	27	40	26
Southend	26	5	10	11	25	46	25
Bradford	26	5	8	13	23	42	23
Grimsby	24	5	7	12	26	44	22

Second division

(21) Brentford v Wycombe P
(22) Bristol Rovers v Plymouth P
(23) Burnley v Chesterfield
(24) Crewe v Millwall †
(25) Luton v Bury P
(26) Notts County v Bournemouth P
(27) Peterborough v Watford P
(28) Preston v Wrexham †
(29) Rotherham v Gillingham P
(30) Shrewsbury v Blackpool †
(31) Stockport v York P
(32) Walsall v Bristol City P

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brentford	25	13	8	4	41	26	47
Luton	24	14	4	6	42	26	46
Bury	24	11	9	4	36	23	42
Millwall	26	11	9	6	33	26	41
Stockport	25	11	8	6	32	27	41
Bristol City	25	11	7	7	43	33	40
Burnley	25	12	4	9	38	29	40
Crewe	24	13	1	10	34	27	40
Watford	24	9	12	3	25	19	39
Wrexham	23	10	8	5	31	27	38
Chesterfield	23	11	5	7	23	19	38
Shrewsbury	26	8	8	10	34	40	32
Walsall	24	8	6	10	26	28	30
Bournemouth	26	8	6	12	23	31	30
Bristol Rovers	25	7	8	10	26	29	29
Preston	25	8	5	12	24	29	29
York	24	8	5	11	24	34	29
Blackpool	25	6	10	9	25	27	28
Peterborough	25	6	9	10	37	43	27
Plymouth	25	6	9	10	29	38	27
Gillingham	26	7	6	13	25	36	27
Wycombe	25	6	5	14	22	38	23
Notts County	24	5	7	12	15	26	22
Rotherham	24	3	8	13	20	36	17

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Thatcham v Ryde Sports

Third division

(33) Colchester v Leyton Orient P
(34) * Darlington v Carlisle †
(35) Exeter v Barnet
(36) Hartlepool v Hull
(37) Lincoln v Wigan P
(38) Mansfield v Fulham P
(39) Northampton v Cardiff †
(—) Rochdale v Hereford P
(—) Scarborough v Cambridge Utd P
(—) Scunthorpe v Chester P
(—) Swansea v Doncaster P
(—) Torquay v Brighton

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fulham	25	16	5	4	40	18	53
Carlisle	26	15	7	4	40	24	52
Camb Utd	25	14	5	6	37	30	47
Wigan	24	13	5	6	43	28	44
Swansea	25	11	5	9	38	27	38
Northampton	26	10	7	9	36	29	37
Cardiff	24	11	4	9	28	26	37
Chester	23	10	6	7	27	25	36
Hull	25	8	11	6	25	27	35
Colchester	25	7	13	5	36	30	34
Scunthorpe	25	10	4	11	36	37	34
Scarborough	25	8	10	7	33	32	34
Torquay	26	10	4	12	26	29	34
Barnet	25	8	9	8	25	22	33
Leyton Orient	25	8	8	9	22	22	32
Lincoln	25	8	7	10	31	38	31
Hartlepool	25	9	4	12	30	32	31
Exeter	26	8	6	12	26	35	30
Rochdale	23	7	8	8	29	29	29
Mansfield	24	6	11	7	25	25	29
Doncaster	24	7	3	14	26	38	24
Darlington	25	6	5	14	34	45	23
Hereford	26	6	5	15	26	36	23
Brighton	26	4	6	16	23	46	16

Brighton have been deducted two points

Vauxhall Conference

(—) Bath v Farnborough P
(—) Bromsgrove v Kidderminster †
(—) Dover v Welling P
(—) Hednesford v Telford P
(—) Macclesfield v Altrincham
(—) Morecambe v Southport
(—) Northwich v Halifax (2.0)
(—) * Rushden & D'monds v Kettering †
(—) Slough v Stevenage †
(—) Stalybridge v Gateshead P
(—) Woking v Hayes P

Bell's Scottish League
Premier division

(40) Dundee Utd v Aberdeen
(41) Dunfermline v Raith †
(42) Hibernian v Hearts
(43) Motherwell v Kilmarnock P

First division

(44) East Fife v Stirling
(45) Falkirk v Airdrie
(46) Greenock Morton v St Mirren P
(47) Partick v Clydebank
(48) St Johnstone v Dundee

Second division

(49) Ayr v Stranraer P
(—) Clyde v Brechin P
(—) Dumbarton v Stenhousemuir P
(—) Hamilton v Queen of South P
(—) Livingston v Berwick

Third division

(—) Alloa v East Stirling P
(—) Arbroath v Cowdenbeath
(—) Montrose v Forfar
(—) Queen's Park v Albion †
(—) Ross County v Inverness CT P

DR MARTENS LEAGUE. Premier division: Atherstone v Nuneaton, Baldock v Kings Lynn, Chelmsford v Hastings; Cheltenham v Halesowen, Crawley v Ashford, Dorchester v Merthyr, Gresley v Burton, Newport AFC v Salisbury; Sittingbourne v Gravesend and Northfleet, Worcester City v Gloucester. Postponed: Cambridge City v Sudbury Tn. Midland division: Bedworth v Shepshed D, Corby v Raunds T, Dudley Town v Bilston, Evesham v VS Rugby; Moor Green v Sutton Coldfield Town, Paget R v Solihull Boro; RC Warwick v Redditch, Rothwell v Grantham; Stourbridge v Stafford, Tamworth v Ilkeston. Southern division: Cinderford v Weston-super-Mare; Cirencester Town v Forest Green, Clevedon v Yate; Dartford v Margate; Fisher London v Erith and Belvedere; Fleet T v Fareham; Havant v Weymouth, Newport (IoW) v Bashley; St Leonards v Tonbridge Angels; Waterlooville v Trowbridge, Witney v Buckingham Town

ICIS LEAGUE: Premier division: Bishop's Stortford v Bromley; Chertsey v Boreham Wood, Dulwich v Harrow; †Enfield v Dagenham and Red; Hendon v Yeovil; Heybridge v Grays; St Albans v Aylesbury; †Sutton United v Kingstonian (11.30); Yeading v Carshalton. First division: Abingdon Town v Molesey; Aldershot Town v Thame, Barton Rovers v Wokingham, Billericay v Croydon; Bognor Regis v Basingstoke; Chesham v Maidenhead United; Hampton v Tooting and Mitcham; Leyton Pennant v Marlow; Uxbridge v Worthing, Walton and Hersham v Canvey Island. Second division: Cheshunt v Collier Row and Romford; Edgware v Windsor and Eton; H Hempstead v Bedford T, Horsham v Dorking; Hungerford v Wembley; Leatherhead v Bracknell; Tilbury v Banstead, Ware v Chalfont St Peter, Witham v Barking.

COURAGE COMBINED COUNTIES: Premier division: Cobham v Raynes Park Vale; Corinthian-Casuals v Cranleigh; Cove v Hartley Wintney; Farnham v Ash; Feltham v Bedfont; Godalming and Guildford v Westfield; Merstham v Chipstead; Sandhurst v Reading; Viking Sports v Ashford; Walton Casuals v Netherne.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Cray v Crockenhill (2.15); Lordswood v Beckenham (2.0); Sheppey v Chatham; Whitstable v Folkestone Invicta.

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Burgess Hill v Oakwood; Eastbourne Town v Southwick, Langney Sports v Hailsham (7.30); Mile Oak v Saltdean; Peacehaven and Telscombe v Whitehawk; Ringmer v Hassocks (7.30); Shoreham v Selsey; Three Bridges v Horsham YMCA; Wick v Pagham (7.30).

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE: Premier division, Cliftonville v Glenavon, Coleraine v Linfield; Glentoran v Ards, Portadown v Crusaders. First division: Ballyclare v Ballymena; Bangor v Carrick; Distillery v Newry, Omagh v Larne.

ENDSLEIGH INSURANCE MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division (2.0 unless stated). Alvechurch v West Midland Fire Service (2.45). Bilston Community College v Meir KA (2.45); Boldmere S v Wellesbourne (2.45); Coleshill v Handrahan Timbers; David Lloyd v Knowle; Kenilworth v Coventry Sphinx; Kings Heath v Richmond Swifts; Massey-Ferguson v Southam, Shirley v Highgate, Worcester v Studley BKL.

BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division. Brierley Hill T v Cradley Town; Gornal Res v Lye Town; Ludlow T v Westfields; Malvern T v Stourport S; Stafford T v Wolverhampton C; Tividale v Wolverhampton United; Walsall Wood v Darlaston.

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Barrow v Lancaster; Runcorn v Marine. Postponed: Accrington Stanley v Spennymoor, Boston v Gainsborough; Buxton v Alfreton; Chorley v Bamber Bridge; Leek v Witton. First division: Bradford Park Avenue v Farsley Celtic; Harrogate Town v Matlock Town; Radcliffe v Ashton United; Worksop v Lincoln United

INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE: Barwell v Stapenhill, Blakenall v Bloxwich Town; Halesowen H v West Midlands Police; Pelsall V v Rushall O; Pershore T v Bridgnorth; Rocester v Chasetown (7.30); Sandwell v Oldbury U; Shifnal T v Knypersley V, Stratford T v Hinckley Athletic; Willenhall v Boldmere St M.

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Westbury v Calne; Torrington v Barnstaple.

RUGBY UNION

Kick-off 2.30 unless stated

Tour match

Emerging Wales v United States XV
(at Cardiff Arms Park) ....

CLUB MATCHES: Fylde v Blackpool; Hartlepool Rovers v West Hartlepool (2.15).

RUGBY LEAGUE

CLUB MATCHES: St Helens v Wigan (at Knowsley Road; 2.30). Postponed: Dewsbury v Batley; Keighley v Huddersfield.

OTHER SPORT

DARTS: WDC world championship (at Purfleet).

هكذا من الأصل

Andrew Longmore finds a confident team leader in good spirits

Nicholls matches ambition with ability

Paul Nicholls looked a little the worse for wear, something to do with the stable Christmas party and a flirtation with the karaoke machine, but his enthusiasm on a grey morning remained undimmed. "We had a good night, but, do you know, everyone was in here by 6.30 this morning," he said as the familiar hollow click of hoof on concrete heralded first lot and one by one the revellers blinked into the misty light to begin their dawn rituals.

The sight of so many good horses provides the ideal cure for a hangover and by the time Nicholls has dispatched his frontline troops onto the gallops above the picture postcard Somerset village of Ditcheat, he was in full flow.

In the tight little world of racing, the word is out that a young and gifted rival has emerged from Lorna Doone country with an assembly of jumping talent to match the best in the land.

In only his fifth season in business, Nicholls is lying fifth in the trainers' championship and his yard hums with ambition and vigour. This is a young team moulded in the image of its confident and jovial leader. "There is too much doom and gloom in racing," Nicholls said. "People should concentrate on getting on and enjoying it."

Nicholls has been more frustrated than most by the Christmas freeze. His horses were primed and ready for an assault on the big prizes, but one by one his hopes were thwarted by the weather or the going. The promising novice chaser, See More Business, was withdrawn from Kempton's Boxing Day meeting, but the biggest blow was the abandonment of the Welsh National, for which Belmont King was a strong favourite.

Nicholls has high hopes for Belmont King, a young chaser of impeccable temperament and unlimited potential, whose comeback victory at Chepstow, after nearly two years away with a leg injury, opened up all manner of conquests. That victory, Nicholls said, was the most satisfying of his career, a reward for the patience of Mrs Billie Bond, the 72-year-old owner, and an emphatic confirmation of his own relaxed yet rhythmic training methods. Few horses leave Nicholls's yard for a gentle day out.

"I worked it out when I was riding," he said. "It was incredible the number of horses who were unfit. Pipe was winning everything because his horses were fit. I don't see the point in giving horses a run just for the sake of it. I want to send them out first time fit enough to win, but with room for improvement."

Nicholls would be the first to admit that his timing has been fortunate. An advertisement in *The Sporting Life* at the end of 1991 coincided with the end of his perennial battle against weight as a National Hunt jockey. This brought him to Manor Farm Stables, owned by Paul Barber, a dairy farmer, one of whose two ambitions — to milk 1,000 cows and win the Gold Cup — matched his own. "As soon as I saw the gallops I was up here like a shot," he recalled. "I couldn't believe it."

The first horse they bought was See More Indians, a highly talented young chaser, whose life was cut short. Nicholls's first winner as a trainer, Olveston, on December 23, 1991, was owned by his parents. From there, the chart has shown a steady progression: ten winners in his first season, then 20, 53 last year and already 35 this season, the majority guided home by the champion, Tony McCoy, whose own drive has fused perfectly with Nicholls's.

"As soon as I saw him I thought: 'this boy's good'. He was just like Dunwoody. He's good at schooling, he's very determined and he's good on the racetrack. He is in a different league from me as a jockey."

At the age of 34, Nicholls has already defied convention by making an effortless leap into the top ranks of trainers. "I've got a super yard, super owners, super horses, super staff. I'm much more relaxed about it now and I'm doing the job better. Sometimes in those early days, I was trying too hard. I said I would give it five years, but I never thought I would fail. I've always wanted to be a trainer and I'm very determined."

Nicholls has been in the game long enough to beware complacency, but the future looks bright and not just because all 52 boxes in the yard are full and plans to expand to 75 are already in hand. Belmont King is being aimed for the Grand National, but Nicholls has backed him each-way at 50-1 for the Gold Cup, just in case.

"People are always writing about the 'ever ambitious Paul Nicholls' and stuff like that. But you've got to be ambitious. If you train with a positive attitude, your horses will have a positive attitude."

Meanwhile, Belmont King has more important duties, carrying Nicholls's pregnant wife, Bridget, safely through morning gallops. The baby is due in June, adding to the unmistakable air of expectancy hanging over the Nicholls yard in the new year.

Nicholls keeps a watchful eye on his string during morning exercise on his scenic Somerset gallops. Photograph: David Howells

Elimination of suspects points to White Willow

By Richard Evans, Racing Correspondent

THE best way to find the winner of a race is first to identify the losers — and that task is often easier on the all-weather because of the high percentage of horses who never trouble the judge.

At Southwell this afternoon, the Thinking & Drinking Handicap (2.40) is a case where the process of elimination points backers in the right direction. Starting from the bottom of the handicap in this moderate contest over two miles, What Jim Wants is a maiden after 15 starts, having his first run on Fibresand and first race for 72 days.

Hunting Ground won five races on turf in 1993 but has never run at Southwell and has been off the course for 910 days. Record Lover won a weakly contested amateur riders' race over course and distance a year ago but is out of form and without a run for eight weeks. Elite Bliss, another maiden, did produce an improved effort when stepped up in trip last time and is weighted to reverse form with the winner, Golden Hadeer, but this is a better class race.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: WHITE WILLOW
(2.40 Southwell)

Next Best: Standown
(12.35 Southwell)

Sharp Command is moderate and ran a stinker last time; Master Foodbroker is lightly raced and untrustworthy while Tee Tee Too, far from sure to see out this trip, is harshly weighted for a horse who has not won since 1994. All of which leaves White Willow.

The eight-year-old was claimed out of Mary Reveley's yard after comfortably winning a hurdle race at Newcastle just 16 days ago — so he should be fit. Just as important, he defied a big weight in a handicap on his only start at Southwell in 1994 and recorded a performance a stone better than any of his rivals have achieved. **White Willow**, the mount of Seb Sanders, should be able to run his opponents into the ground.

High Premium, the winner of five races last year including three on the all-weather, is likely to start favourite for the first and more competitive division of the Resolution Claiming Stakes (12.35). However, the tough nine-year-old is arguably best over a mile at Southwell and may just lack the necessary pace here.

In contrast, **Standown** has looked as though a return to seven furlongs would suit in his two most recent runs, notably when staying on at Wolverhampton 13 days ago. He could offer some value.

The New Year Handicap (3.40) hardly oozes quality and is best judged by the comments of David Barron after he sent out Fast Spin to win a seller at Southwell five days ago. "He's a bad horse running in a bad race," he said.

Fast Spin is not without a chance of following up in a mediocre finale but may have to give best to **As-Is**, who is representing the Mark Johnston — Jason Weaver combination. He should appreciate this mile trip on his all-weather debut.

☐ Ashley Bealby, Southwell's clerk of the course, expects no problems for today's programme despite almost six inches of snow having fallen on the track during the last 24 hours. "We have had five to six inches of snow and the prospects should be fine as long as there is no heavy snow overnight," he said yesterday. "The track is raceable today."

THUNDERER

12.35 ELTON LEDGER (nap)
1.05 Hever Golf Eagle
1.35 Chillbang Bang
2.05 Belinda Blue
2.40 Sharp Command
3.10 Ball-Pet
3.40 Skelton Sovereign

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating:
3.10 INDIAN RAPTURE.

103 (12) 0-0432 GOOD TIMES 74 (CD,BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 9-10-0 .. B West (4) 88

Racecard number. Draw in brackets. Six-figure form (F — fell. P — pulled up. U — unseated rider. B — brought down. S — slipped up. R — refused. O — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing: J B hurdle, F'll flat. (B — blinkers, V — visor, H — hood, E — Eyeshield, C — course winner, D — distance winner, CD — course and distance winner, BF — beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard, G — good, S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. The Times Private Handicapper's rating.

GOING: STANDARD
TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE
SIS

12.35 RESOLUTION CLAIMING STAKES
(Div I: £1,944: 7f) (11 runners)

101 (7) 1129- HIGH PREMIUM 18 (C,D,BF,F,G) (J Parsons) R Fahey 9-9-7 .... A Culhane 95
102 (3) 35560- ANONYM 4 (B,D,F,G) (Wetherby Bureau) D Nicholls 5-9-3 .... J Bramhill (7) 87
103 (11) 0- SALLY ARMSTRONG 13 (Tapits Lee & Cain) C Thornton 4-9-2 .... D McKeown 77
104 (9) 36122- ELTON LEDGER 40 (V,CD,F,G) (The Pease) Mrs N Macauley 8-9-13 S Sanders (5) 99
105 (4) 00000- RAMBO WALTZER 4 (CD,F,G,S) (W Swiers) D Nicholls 5-9-13 .... Alex Greaves 90
106 (2) 00000- DICTATION 13 (B) (A Barry) J J O'Neill 5-9-11 .... Dean O'Neill 80
107 (6) 20505- STANDOWN 13 (V,F,G,S) (Mrs C Devlin) J Berry 4-8-9 .... P Roberts (5) 96
108 (1) 6245- SANTELLA KATIE 146 (B K Partners) Mrs L Stubbs 4-8-8 .... S Whitworth 98
109 (8) 65060- LITTLE BMR 13 (CD,F,G) (Swinnerton Transport) P Evans 5-8-5 .... J Quinn 90
110 (5) 20020- SEA DEVIL 233 (C,D,F,G,S) (A Goacher) M Camacho 11-8-3 .... L Charnock 94
111 (10) 00000- HAVANA MISS 40 (S) (Mrs L Hedlund) B Palling 5-8-2 .... S Drowne 81

BETTING: 7-4 High Premium, 9-2 Elton Ledger, 6-1 Sea Devil, 8-1 Santella Katie, 10-1 Anonym, Rambo Waltzer, 14-1 others.

1995: NO CORRESPONDING MEETING

FORM FOCUS

HIGH PREMIUM 5¼l 3rd of 12 to South Eastern Fred in handicap at Wolverhampton (AW, 1m 1f 79y). ELTON LEDGER head 2nd of 13 to Cloudleigh Hall in claimer here (AW, 1m) with HAVANA MISS (9lb better off) 11l 7th. DICTATION 8¾l 7th of 12 to Quinze Martin in handicap over course and distance (AW). STANDOWN 5¼l 5th of 13 to Marjorie Rose in claimer at Wolverhampton (AW, 6f) with SALLY ARMSTRONG (2lb worse off) 7¼l 7th. SANTELLA KATIE 17¼l 5th of 7 to Pirates Quest in apprentice maiden handicap at Bath (good to firm, 1m 2f). LITTLE BMR 10l 7th of 12 to Mr Frosty in claimer at Wolverhampton (AW, 6f). SEA DEVIL 3l 2nd of 15 to Kilpatinger in seller here (AW, 6f) on penultimate start.
Selection: STANDOWN

1.05 ONE TOO MANY MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES
(Apprentices: £2,502: 1m 3f) (10 runners)

201 (8) 00/00- ACERBUS DULCIS 29 (G Hoole) M Chapman 6-9-2 .... O Pears —
202 (4) 04443/ PROPHETS HONOUR 361J (M Wickham) P Haslam 5-9-2 .... Martin Dwyer (3) —
203 (7) 43206- TAMYAR 5 (Mrs J Hughes) R Hollinshead 5-9-2 .... D Griffiths (3) 79
204 (2) 02600- ZATOPEK 28 (A Spangs) J Cullinan 5-9-2 .... R Winston (7) 92
205 (1) 00003- NEVER GOLF EAGLE 6 (Never Racing Club) T Naughton 4-8-13 .. P Fossey (3) —
206 (3) 64- THE ODDFELLOW 181 (H Ngan) R Bycroft 4-8-13 .... J Bramhill (5) —
207 (9) 00300- FRESH FRUIT DAILY 44 (K Hudson) P Kelleway 5-8-11 .. Angela Gallimore (5) 92
208 (10) 00- ALANA'S BALLAD 221 (Robinson & Hare) B Baugh 4-8-8 .... P Roberts (3) 88
209 (5) DISHY DIAMOND (Mrs M Wickham) W Muir 4-8-8 .... J Wilkinson (5) —
210 (6) 00/000- EMIR SHAH 40 (Miss C Overton) W G M Turner 4-8-8 .... D McGaffin (7) —

BETTING: 8-4 Prophets Honour, 5-2 Fresh Fruit Daily, 6-1 Never Golf Eagle, 8-1 Dishy Diamond, The Oddfellow, 10-1 Zatopek, 12-1 Emir Shah, 14-1 others.

FORM FOCUS

PROPHETS HONOUR beat Cyrus The Great 1¾l in novice hurdle at Fakenham (2m, good). TAMYAR distant 6th of 7 to Alisiba in maiden here (1m 4f, AW). ZATOPEK 15l 7th of 16 to Three Weeks in handicap here (1m, AW). NEVER GOLF EAGLE 5l 3rd of 9 to Royal Carlton in maiden at Lingfield (1m, AW). THE ODDFELLOW 2¾l 4th of 5 to Society Girl in claimer at Ayr (1m 2f, good to soft). FRESH FRUIT DAILY 20l 8th of 15 to Domino Flyer in rated stakes here (1m, AW). ALANA'S BALLAD 24l 8th of 9 to Cry Baby in claimer at Warwick (1m 3f, good).
Selection: NEVER GOLF EAGLE

1.35 RESOLUTION CLAIMING STAKES
(Div II: £1,944: 7f) (11 runners)

301 (10) 00020- AWESOME VENTURE 85 (CD,G,S) M Chapman 7-9-7 .... O Pears (3) 89
302 (7) 01150- DEEPLY VALE 12 (D,F,G,S) (Sandstone Telecom) E Wheeler 6-9-7 .. A Daly (3) 95
303 (11) 50406- PAINT IT BLACK 69 (D,G) (M Scally) D Nicholls 4-9-3 .... Alex Greaves 95
304 (6) 00- SEANCHAI 13 (A Bley) P Felgate 4-8-11 .... J Stack —
305 (9) 55426- JILLY BEVELED 32 (P D Byrnes Steadily) R Thompson 5-8-8 .. C Teague (3) 77
306 (1) 10300- DAHIYAH 66 (V,F,G) (W Clifford) B Scott 6-8-7 .... S Sanders (5) 99
307 (2) 3-41450- WARHURST 70 (C,G) (V Greaves) D Nicholls 6-8-7 .... A Clark 93
308 (5) 04000- CHILBANG BANG 13 (V,CD,G,S) (I Crawford) J Berry 4-8-6 .... P Fossey (5) 89
309 (8) 44000- SWEET MATE 36 (B,CD,G) (Mrs P Barrett) M Meade 5-8-1 .... N Adams 80
310 (3) 0/0- PARELLIE 37 (G) (J Hill) P Evans 4-7-12 .... J Quinn —
311 (4) 000/00- KAJOSTAR 21 (B Faraday) S Compton 7-7-10 .... N Carlisle —

BETTING: 4-7 Deeply Vale, 5-1 Westoral, Chilbang Bang, 6-1 Awesome Venture, Paint It Black, 8-1 Dahiyah, 10-1 Jilly Beveled, 12-1 others.

FORM FOCUS

AWESOME VENTURE 1¼l 2nd of 28 in amateurs handicap at Redcar (1m, firm) on penultimate start. DEEPLY VALE 20l last of 15 to Speedy Classic in handicap at Lingfield (7f, AW). PAINT IT BLACK about 6l 5th of 18 to Holloway Maiden in claimer at Nottingham (1m, good). JILLY BEVELED 11¼l 2nd of 17 to Shealebagrey in handicap at Bath (1m, good to soft) on penultimate start. CHILBANG BANG 20l 8th of 13 to Three Weeks in handicap at Wolverhampton (1m 100yd, AW). SWEET MATE 17l 7th of 12 to Mozart in handicap at Lingfield (1m, AW). KAJOSTAR 16l 11th of 12 to Mr Neverend in claimer at Lingfield (1m, AW).
Selection: JILLY BEVELED

2.05 EAST MIDLANDS ELECTRICITY LINCOLN FILLIES HANDICAP
(£2,765: 6f) (12 runners)

401 (8) 32132- NAPIER STAR 19 (V,CD,G) (P Heaton) Mrs N Macauley 4-10-0 C Teague (3) 95
402 (6) 00162- SHASHI 13 (CD,F,G) (Mrs A Sanders) Pat Mitchell 5-9-7 Amanda Sanders (5) 98
403 (9) 05000- KLIPSPINGER 29 (B,CD,G) (Achton Racing) B Rothwell 4-9-1 .... J Stack 90
404 (2) 65255- AMITA'S CONTESSA 4 (G) (Mrs A Quinn) B Palling 5-9-1 .... Dean O'Neill —
405 (1) 50008- GI LA HIGH 33 (C,G) (Ladywood Racing) M Meade 4-8-0 D Sweeney (5) 95
406 (10) 00000- TIME CLASH 40 (B,D,F,G) (Mrs D Hughes) B Palling 4-8-6 .... A Clark —
407 (11) 05403- BALLARD LADY 44 (D,G,S) (Mrs P Waley) J Wainwright 5-8-6 .. J Bramhill (7) 95
408 (5) 000/ JUSTFORTHERECORD 418 (Mrs S Jones) B Millman 5-8-3 .... S Drowne —
409 (3) 00060- MAYSIMP 138 (Mrs J Cinnmes) B Baugh 4-8-2 .... N Adams 88
410 (4) 00410- HONEYHALL 29 (CD,G) (S McLaughlin) N Bycroft 4-8-0 .... J Quinn 96
411 (12) 56006- BELINDA BLUE 29 (Mrs J Jackson) R Fahey 5-7-13 .... R Winston (7) 94
412 (7) 03050- JUBA 5 (T Drew) J Scargill 5-7-10 .... N Carlisle 98

BETTING: 11-4 Napier Star, 4-1 Shashi, 6-1 Gi La High, 8-1 Ballard Lady, Honeyhall, 10-1 Klipspinger, 12-1 Anita's Contessa, 14-1 others.

FORM FOCUS

NAPIER STAR 4l 2nd of 10 to Mijas in handicap at Lingfield (5f, AW). SHASHI 1l 2nd of 13 to Mande Rose in handicap at Wolverhampton (6f, AW). AMITA'S CONTESSA 17½l 5th of 10 to Murray's Mazda in handicap at Wolverhampton (7f, AW). GI LA HIGH neck 3rd of 16 to Chodwell Hall in claimer over course and distance (AW) with SHASHI (5lb better off) 3½l 6th. TIME CLASH 17l 9th of 16 to Shantana in handicap here (7f, AW). HONEYHALL beat Queens Check ½l in 15-runner handicap over course and distance (AW) on penultimate start with BALLARD LADY (3lb better off) further short-head 3rd. BELINDA BLUE 11½l 6th of 13 to Jibereen in handicap over course and distance (AW) with HONEYHALL (4lb worse off) 13l 7th. JUBA 25l 8th of 9 to Kalar in handicap over course and distance (AW).
Selection: BALLARD LADY (nap)

2.40 THINKING & DRINKING HANDICAP
(£2,726: 2m) (9 runners)

501 (3) 3/34U/4- WHITE WILLOW 16J (C,G,S) (P Stringer) T Wall 6-10-0 .... S Sanders 90
502 (1) 00000- TEE TEE TOO 23J (G) (S Bruce) A Carroll 5-9-11 .... G Milligan (7) —
503 (2) 40/00- MASTER FOODBROKER 51 (B,CD,G) (Broughsen) W Musson 9-9-2 S Whitworth —
504 (9) 03013- GOLDEN HADEER 13 (C,G,S) (Four Jays Racing) M Ryan 6-8-13 .. A Clark 91
505 (4) 54210- SHARP COMMAND 11J (G) (A Holland) P Eccles 4-8-11 .... J Weaver 93
506 (7) 00543- ELITE BLISS 33 (Elite Racing) M Camacho 5-8-7 .... L Charnock 91
507 (6) 02650- RECORD LOVER 23J (CD,G) (A Mann) M Chapman 7-8-1 .. Iona Wands (7) —
508 (5) 11/00/ HUNTING GROUND 910 (D,F,G) (Esprit de Corps) B Baugh 9-8-0 .. F Norton —
509 (6) 06200- WHAT JIM WANTS 11J (Clayton Bigley) J J O'Neill 4-7-10 .... J Quinn 96

Long handicap: What Jim Wants 7-9.

BETTING: 5-2 Golden Hadeer, 3-1 White Willow, 9-2 Master Foodbroker, 5-1 Sharp Command, 6-1 Elite Bliss, 10-1 What Jim Wants, 12-1 Tee Tee Too

FORM FOCUS

WHITE WILLOW 7l 4th of 11 to Anan Spirit in handicap at Newcastle (2m, good to soft). MASTER FOODBROOKER 4¾l 7th of 11 to No More Hassle in claimer at Folkestone (2m 110y, soft). GOLDEN HADEER 5¼l 3rd of 12 to Rasayel in amateurs handicap at Wolverhampton (1m 4f, AW). Previous best Our Man Man ½l in 10-runner handicap here (1m 6f, AW) with ELITE BLISS (2lb better off) further neck away 3rd. SHARP COMMAND beat Rose Of Glen 1¼l in 9-runner handicap at Wolverhampton (1m 7f, AW) on penultimate start.
RECORD LOVER 7¼l 5th of 20 to Petoskin in selling handicap at Yarmouth (1m 3f 110y, good to firm) on penultimate start.
Selection: GOLDEN HADEER

3.10 MORNING CALL SELLING STAKES
(3-Y-O: £2,189: 1m) (11 runners)

601 (6) 00212- BALL-PET 25 (B,CD,G) (N Cannell) W G M Turner 9-3 .. D Sweeney (5) 89
602 (8) 00- BENTMOSE 18 (Clearview Partners) D Morris 8-12 .... A Clark 79
603 (2) 8000- BILLYCAN 135 (F Dobby) B Baugh 8-12 .... R Perham 62
604 (9) 66302- CHASETOWN FLYER 5 (Chasetown Civil Eng) R Hollinshead 8-12 .. W Ryan 83
605 (3) 55261- HEAD GIRL 29 (CD,G) (The Challengers) C Thornton 8-12 .... D McKeown 90
606 (5) 0- PAMELA'S BOY 68 (Bandits, Punter, Tate) A Smith 8-12 .... M Wigham —
607 (7) 0006- STATE OF GOLD 18 (K West Partners) J Hetherton 8-12 .. S Whitworth 94
608 (10) 550- DIAMOND EYRE 40 (Diamond Racing) J Eyre 8-7 .... R Lappin 84
609 (4) 055- HOH DOWN 19 (V) (D Allport) K McAuliffe 8-7 .... S Sanders 74
610 (11) 8660- INDIAN RAPTURE 67 (R Thompson) R Thompson 8-7 .... J Quinn —
611 (1) 30520- ROYAL ROULETTE 19 (V,BF) (W P Jackson) S Woods 8-7 .. C Webb (7) 86

BETTING: 7-2 Ball-Pet, 4-1 Head Girl, 5-1 Chasetown Flyer, 7-1 Royal Roulette, 8-1 Diamond Eyre, State Of Gold, Hoh Down, 12-1 others.

FORM FOCUS

BALL-PET 2¾l 2nd of 11 to Lightning Bolt in seller at Wolverhampton (AW, 7f) with CHASETOWN FLYER (5lb better off) 23l 10th. CHASETOWN FLYER 5l 2nd of 5 to Fast Spin in seller here (AW, 7f) HEAD GIRL beat ROYAL ROULETTE (2lb worse off) 1½l in 11-runner seller over course and distance (AW). STATE OF GOLD best effort 6l 8th of 11 to Bandore in maiden at Lingfield (7f 14dyds, firm). DIAMOND EYRE about 14l 5th of 13 to Stakes Casinos Lad in seller here (AW, 7f) HOH DOWN 13½l 5th of 8 to Supreme Maimoon in auction maiden at Lingfield (AW, 7f) with ROYAL ROULETTE (6lb worse off) 23l 7th.
Selection: HEAD GIRL

3.40 NEW YEAR HANDICAP
(3-Y-O: £2,752: 1m) (6 runners)

1. (1) 62160- MARSH MARIGOLD 67 (S) (Ladywood Racing) M Meade 9-7 D Sweeney (5) 96
2. (3) 506- AS-IS 70 (R Robinson) M Johnston 9-7 .... J Weaver 94
3. (2) 01- PINCHINCHA 33 (CD,G) (T Wells) D Morris 9-7 .... A Clark 93
4. (5) 22520- GOING FOR BROKE 13 (Dunnington & Swan) P Haslam 9-4 .. S Drowne —
5. (6) 01025- SKELTON SOVEREIGN 37 (F) (G Bailey) R Hollinshead 9-2 .. D Griffiths (5) 98
6. (4) 0461- FAST SPIN 5 (C,G) (E Buck) T Barron 9-1 (6ex) .... A Culhane 98

BETTING: 5-2 Fast Spin, 7-2 Pinchincha, 4-1 As-Is, 5-1 Going For Broke, 6-1 Skelton Sovereign, 7-1 Marsh Marigold.

FORM FOCUS

MARSH MARIGOLD best effort beat Vaccapino 3½l in 23-runner selling handicap at Haydock (6f, soft). AS-IS 13¾l 6th of 12 to Rifaa in maiden at Newcastle (6f, good to firm) PINCHINCHA beat Bonne Ville 2l in 9-runner seller over course and distance (AW). GOING FOR BROKE 1¼l 2nd of 9 to Juliette Mia in maiden at Newcastle (7f, good to firm) on penultimate start. SKELTON SOVEREIGN ¾l 2nd of 11 to Hello Dolly in handicap at Wolverhampton (AW, 1m 100yds) on penultimate start. FAST SPIN beat Chasetown Flyer 5l in 5-runner seller here (AW, 7f).
Selection: MARSH MARIGOLD

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Runs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
M Johnston	44	217	20.3	D Holland	29	108	21.3
M Ryan	21	107	19.6	J Weaver	48	253	19.0
K McAuliffe	7	42	16.7	D Pears	14	93	15.1
T Barron	37	252	14.7	C Teague	23	181	12.7
J Eyre	25	172	14.5	Alex Greaves	25	199	12.6
S Woods	9	62	14.5	D McKeown	38	325	11.7

JULIAN HERBERT

Rasayel, left, rounds the home turn to win on the Equitrack at Lingfield yesterday, the only meeting to survive

Musselburgh holds strongest hopes

MUSSELBURGH on Saturday looks the most likely venue for a resumption of the jumping programme. Turf racing has not taken place in Britain since the Scottish track's card last Friday and prospects for the remainder of this week are bleak.

Mark Kershaw, the course manager at Musselburgh, reported yesterday: "I would not put it as strongly as to say it is promising, but, though we have had a slight frost and a dusting of snow, nothing has got into the ground. It looks like it will be cold, but not severe, so there must be a chance."

The all-weather card at Southwell is the only surviving fixture today. The scheduled jumps meetings at Cheltenham, Catterick, Exeter, Leicester, Windsor and Uttoxeter had all been called off by noon yesterday.

Tomorrow's cards at Ayr and Market Rasen have also fallen. "Siberian weather conditions look like staying until the weekend at least." Charlie Moore, the clerk of the course at Market Rasen, said. At Ayr, a spokesman said after a 3.00pm inspection yesterday: "The temperature has not risen above zero all day."

On Friday, the jumps meetings at Lingfield, Sedgefield and Towcester all report frost and snow. Local forecasts suggest there is little chance of a thaw.

Matters look no better on Saturday. The cards at Haydock and Sandown also look likely to fall. Andrew Cooper, the clerk of the course at Sandown, said yesterday: "The temperature has left parts of the course frozen and it would have been sufficient to stop us racing today, although you would not describe the course as frozen.

"We have had a dusting of snow: nothing too serious, but there will be more snow showers around tonight. It is too early to be sure, but you would have to say that the chance of racing on Saturday must be pretty slim."

Dublin Flyer, Unguided Missile, Collier Bay and Dato Star figure among the entries at Haydock. Philip Arkwright, the clerk of the course, reported: "We are freezing at the moment. The forecast is not too good and I am not hopeful."

Warwick, whose meeting yesterday was abandoned, will need a rapid thaw to race on Saturday. "I wouldn't be telling people to get their racing boots on," a spokesman said.

PROSPECTS

TOMORROW'S MEETINGS

LINGFIELD PARK: all-weather meeting
AYR: abandoned
MARKET RASEN: abandoned

FRIDAY

LINGFIELD PARK: frozen
SEDGEFIELD: frost and snow
SOUTHWELL: all-weather meeting
TOWCESTER: frozen

SATURDAY

SANDOWN: partly frozen (inspection today)
WARWICK: partly frozen (inspection today)

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Lingfield Park

Going: standard

12.55 (1m 5f) 1. RASAYEL (Anthony Bond, 4-1); 2. Broughtons Formula (Darren Williams, 3-1 jt-fav); 3. More Than You Know (Emily Joyce, 12-1). ALSO RAN: 3-1 jt-fav Mamias Mystique (5th). 7-2 Coh Sho No 9 Active (4th). 16 Al Haal (5th), 33 Queens Fancy 9 ran. ½l, 1-1l, 2½l, 2l. P Evans at Weshpool. Tote £5.40; £1.90, £1.30, £3.90. DF £8.80. CSF £16.44. Tricast £123.05.

1.25 (6f) 1. JUST LOUI (D Sweeney, 11-4); 2. Rock To The Top (A Morris, 13-2); 3. Eager To Please (Dane O Neill, 10-1). ALSO RAN: 6-5 fav Kirculen Lad (5th), 10 Advance Repro (6th), Heavenly Miss (4th). 6 ran. NR: Windborn. 1½l, 1l, 4l, 4l, 6l. W G M Turner at Sherborne. Tote: £2.60; £2.80, £4.50. DF £12.50. CSF £18.39.

1.55 (5f) 1. HEVER GOLF LOVER (D Holland, 5-2 fav); 2. Countess Times (Clare O Neill, 6-1); 3. Green Boulevard (F Roberts, 7-2). ALSO RAN: 100-30 Incarnine (5th), 7-2 Enslerna Parida (4th), 33 She's Electric (6th). 6 ran. 4l, sh hd, 11l, ¾l, 3½l. T Naughton at Epsom. Tote £4.10; £1.90, £1.60. DF £9.00. CSF £16.05.

2.25 (6f) 1. MISTER RAIDER (A Daly, 7-1); 2. Shiah (A Clark, 9-2); 3. Squire Corrie (D Holland, 6-1). ALSO RAN: 7-2 fav Cheeky Chappy, 4 Celston-C, 8 Dalmera (4th), Oscilights Gift (fur), 16 Windrush Bay (5th), 20 Bright Paragon (6th), 33 Dancing Jack. 10 ran. ¾l, nk, 8l, nk, 6l. E Wheeler at Pangbourne. Tote: £9.40; £2.60, £2.80, DF £36.30. Tric £60.30. CSF £38.07. Tricast £163.26.

2.55 (1m 2f) 1. ADAMTON (Martin Dwyer, 7-2); 2. Suitor (A Daly, 14-1); 3. Kitty Kitty Cancan (A Clark, 8-1). ALSO RAN: 3-1 fav Angel Face, Double Rush, 7 Harlequin Walk (5th), 10 Philister (4th), 16 Dance Of Joy (6th), 33 Great Bear. 9 ran. 1½l, 2½l, 5l, 4l, 5l. Mrs J Cecil at Newmarket. Tote £4.50; £1.40, £2.60, £3.70. DF £31.10. Trio £166.10. CSF £46.06. Tricast £342.13.

3.25 (7f) 1. RIVER SEINE (S Sanders, 9-2); 2. Gold Lance (D Holland, 11-4); 3. Magazine Gap (Amanda Sanders, 4-1). ALSO RAN: 5-2 fav Evening In Paris (4th), 9 Jareer Do (5th), 12 Gracious Gretclo, Hightide, Square Mile Miss (6th), 16 Shermood, 33 Logic Perl. Lad. 10 ran. 1½l, nk, 2½l, 4l, nk. S Knight at Taunton. Tote: £4.80; £1.70, £1.30, £3.60. DF £10.10. Trio: £28.00. CSF £19.37.

Jackpot: not won (pool of £5,847.38 carried forward to Southwell today).

Placepot: £121.10.

Quadpot: £34.20.

☐ Catterick and Fontwell Park abandoned because of snow and frost.

BLINKERS

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Southwell: 12.35 Standown. 1.35 Parellie. 2.05 Time Clash. 3.10 Royal Roulette, Hoh Down.

RACELINE
0930 168+ COMMENTARY RESULTS
SOUTHWELL 101 201
IRISH 120 220
G'HOUNDS 122 222
FULL RESULTS SERVICE 168

Duty to homeless asylum seeker

Regina v Kensington and Chelsea Royal London Borough Council, Ex parte Korneva

Before Lord Justice Simon Brown, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Hobhouse

[Judgment December 5]

The statutory duty owed to an asylum seeker who was homeless, in priority need and who did not become homeless intentionally, was to secure suitable temporary accommodation for such period as an applicant was an asylum seeker.

The Court of Appeal so stated allowing an appeal by the applicant, Irina Korneva, from the order of Mr Roger Henderson, QC, who, sitting as a deputy judge of the Queen's Bench Division on September 23, 1996, had dismissed her application for judicial review of a decision of Kensington and Chelsea Royal London Borough Council, as local housing authority, that the temporary accommodation provided need not be suitable.

Mr Rubert Latham for the applicant; Miss Kate Astaniotis for the council.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that the appeal raised a point affecting hundreds of homeless or ill housed asylum seekers. The point was whether, and if so in what way, homeless asylum seekers applying for accommodation under Part III of the Housing Act 1985 were worse off than non-asylum seeking applicants.

Did an asylum seeker's application have to be processed like any other homelessness application so that, if he or she was in priority need and did not become homeless intentionally, the council was obliged to secure that suitable accommodation became available under sections 65 and 69(1) of the 1985 Act?

The council argued below, and the judge had held that asylum seekers were not so entitled; rather the council might properly delay reaching its decision under section 62, in the meantime discharging merely its interim duty under section 63.

That the council might do by providing accommodation which, albeit it was reasonable for the applicant to occupy having regard to the general circumstances prevailing in relation to the council's housing, need not be suitable accommodation such as had to be provided when a council discharged its final duty under section 65.

Section 4 of the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993 affected all asylum seekers whose applications for Part III accommodation were made after July 26, 1993, provided only that those applying for asylum on or after February 5 did so at the time of, and not after arrival in the United Kingdom: they were otherwise precluded from access to Part III accommodation by the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996.

It was clear that the council accepted the applicant's application as one falling under section 4(3) of the 1993 Act. What then was the meaning and effect of the provision section 4(3)(b) that "any need of [an asylum seeker] for accommodation shall be regarded as temporary only"? That was the question at the heart of the appeal.

Following the decision of the House of Lords in *R v Brent London Borough Council, Ex parte Awua* ([1996] 1 AC 55), whether an applicant for Part III housing was an asylum seeker or not, the section 65 duty could in any event be satisfied by the provision of temporary housing.

In his Lordship's judgment, it followed that nothing in *Awua* supported the council's position in the present appeal. The council's argument was that under paragraph 2 of Schedule 1 to the 1993 Act it was required only to reach the point of determining whether it owed the applicant the interim duty of housing her under section 63, and that under paragraph 3 it was required only to notify her of that, being acquitted by paragraph 3(4) of the need to give in addition a section 64 notice.

Because a section 64 notice expressly encompassed notification of the authority's decision on, inter alia, intentionality. Parliament by the Schedule could, the argument ran, be seen to have been indicating its intention that in the case of asylum seekers, housing authorities did not need to address that issue and so did not need ever to complete their section 62 inquiries.

The argument, although ingenious, to his Lordship's mind appeared wholly impossible. It foundered not least upon:

1 The express reference in paragraph 2 to the requirement that the authority had to include in the inquiries that it was required to make under section 62 the further inquiries special to asylum seekers; nothing there acquitting them of the need ever to undertake some of the section 62 inquiries.

2 The express reference in both paragraphs 2 and 3 to the council being satisfied whether a duty was owed to secure accommodation for the applicant; such satisfaction being the precondition to the section 65 final duty but not to the section 63 interim duty which arose simply at the "reason to believe" stage.

3 The absurdity of supposing that Parliament would seek to disapply the requirement that accommodation to be provided to asylum seekers should be suitable in so obscure and elliptical a fashion.

In his Lordship's judgment all that paragraphs 2 and 3 provided for was the necessary adaptation of sections 62 and 64 of the 1985 Act to encompass the additional inquiries which would need to be made in the case of asylum seekers. Paragraph 4 fulfilled the same function with regard to section 67.

It followed that, since *Awua*, asylum seekers fell to be dealt with essentially like any other applicants for housing under Part III of the 1985 Act. His Lordship would grant the applicant the relief sought.

Lord Justice Peter Gibson gave a concurring judgment and Lord Justice Hobhouse agreed with both judgments.

Solicitors: J. C. Gorringe & Co, Stockwell; Mr A. G. Phillips, Kensington.

Power to agree highway works

Regina v Warwickshire County Council, Ex parte Powergen plc

Before Mr Justice Forbes

[Judgment November 21]

A highway authority's discretion to enter an agreement with a prospective developer to execute highway works was limited in a situation where the proposed works formed a detailed and related part of the planning application for which consent had already been obtained.

The matters remaining would be relatively minor and a proper exercise of the discretion would not embrace a further and separate reconsideration of the benefit to the public of such works solely by reference to the same reasons already determined in the planning process.

Mr Justice Forbes so stated in a reserved judgment in the Queen's Bench Division when allowing an application for judicial review by Powergen plc against a refusal by Warwickshire County Council to enter into an agreement under section 278 of the Highways Act 1980, as substituted by section 23 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, in respect of proposed works pursuant to resolutions by the council on June 15 and August 24, 1995.

In 1994 Powergen applied to the district council for planning permission to develop a site including a supermarket and access from an adjoining road. The district council as local planning authority consulted the county council as local highway authority about the road plans and subsequently refused planning permission.

Following an appeal, the secretary of state's inspector granted conditional outline planning permission. To fulfil the condition Powergen had to carry out highway works which required an agreement under section 278 of the 1980 Act with the highway authority.

Mr William Hicks, QC and Mr Russell Harris for Powergen; Mr Michael Supperstone, QC and Mr Timothy Pitt-Payne for the council.

MR JUSTICE FORBES said that Mr Hicks was right in his submission that a highway authority's discretion to enter an agreement was not an unlimited discretion in every case, although his Lordship was doubtful whether it was correct to describe the discretion generally as a limited one.

In his Lordship's view, the extent to which the discretion could be described as limited would depend on the particular circumstances of each case.

His Lordship accepted that section 278 had to be interpreted in the overall legislative system for the controlled development of land through the planning process.

Where the benefit to the public of the proposed highway works in respect of which a section 278 agreement was sought had been fully considered and determined in the planning process, because the highway works formed a detailed and related aspect of the application for which planning consent had been properly obtained, then the highway authority's discretion whether to enter the agreement would necessarily be somewhat limited.

In such a case the matters remaining to be considered by the highway authority in the proper exercise of its discretion were likely to be relatively minor.

The proper exercise of that discretion would not embrace a further and separate reconsideration of the benefit to the public of the highway works in question solely by reference to the same reasons as those already considered and determined in the planning process.

His Lordship accepted the submission that if section 278 were thus interpreted, there was no need for either the secretary of state or the local planning authority to be given an express power to direct the highway authority to enter into a section 278 agreement in such circumstances.

In the present case the refusal to enter the agreement was unlawful and *Wednesbury* unreasonable.

Solicitors: Wragge & Co, Birmingham; Mr David Carter, Warwick.

Seeking rights of audience

D v S (Rights of Audience)

Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Waite and Lord Justice Waller

[Judgment December 18]

Where a person sought rights of audience under sections 17, 18 and 28 of the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 to conduct proceedings on behalf of a litigant in person the court should, in conformity with the spirit of the Act, grant that an application only in exceptional circumstances.

The Court of Appeal so stated, refusing an application by Dr Pelling for rights of audience to represent D and conduct his application for leave to appeal from Judge Tyrer, sitting at Milton Keynes County Court, who had, inter alia, enjoined him from entering the home he had shared with S and their children pending the outcome of her application for transfer of the tenancy into her sole name under section 15 of and Schedule 1 to the Children Act 1989.

Miss Pamela Scriven, QC and Mr David Boyd for S; D in person.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS referred to the written reasoned request for rights of audience made by Dr Pelling, to his considerable experience in cases of the present kind, and to *Chauhan v Chauhan* (unreported, October 26, 1994, CA (Civ Div) Transcript No 1230) where the Court of Appeal had previously considered the question.

His Lordship analysed *Chauhan* where Dr Pelling had also applied for an order under section 28(2)(c) of the 1990 Act that he should be allowed to provide legal services and conduct the litigation for the appellant who appeared in person.

Having referred to sections 17 and 18 of the 1990 Act Lord Justice Neill had there set out Dr Pelling's arguments in support of his application: that the appellant needed skilled assistance for the proper conduct of his appeal; that he did not wish to apply for legal aid; that Dr Pelling could provide satisfactory legal services at a cheaper rate, calculated to be about a tenth of the charges made by a solicitor; and that unless authorised by the court Dr Pelling could not charge for any litigation services.

In *Chauhan* Lord Justice Neill had referred to the documentation then drawn to the court's attention by Dr Pelling which he provided for people willing to take advantage of his services and to his advertising material.

He had stressed that in the documentation he made it clear he did not have professional indemnity insurance and was not entitled to rights of audience or to conduct litigation unless enabled to do so by the court under the 1990 Act.

He had also submitted that one of the statutory objectives was the provision of new and better ways of providing services; that if he were to act there would be greater expedition and efficiency.

He had further made it clear that if the application were granted in that case, he contemplated making similar applications in other cases and making a career of providing legal services at a fraction of the cost of a solicitor.

Those arguments had been rejected and the application refused.

His Lordship said that Dr Pelling, apparently the chairman of a registered charity: East London Families Need Fathers, had set out his submissions in support of his application in correspondence both to himself and to the court office:

Dr Pelling said that, inter alia, he had appeared for the appellant in the court below; that he had entered the case because of his position in a society which specialised in fathers' rights and provided legal advice and assistance to its members; that he had the requisite knowledge and experience; and that Parliament had favoured persons with specialist knowledge acting for others in certain family law matters.

His Lordship said that a direction on the present question was called for. He could see considerable arguments which could be advanced to the effect that the law as it presently existed was not appropriate and should be relaxed in some way.

However, it had not been relaxed. The Act governed the situation: it gave the court a discretion but made it clear by its terms that the discretion was to be exercised only in exceptional circumstances.

Dr Pelling was conducting assistance in the litigation process which was out of accord with the spirit of the Act.

Whether rights of audience were to be granted was a matter for the court's responsibility, given by Parliament and called for its careful consideration. It was not a matter for the consent of the parties.

Those with rights of audience were subject to stringent requirements and Dr Pelling could not bypass them.

Where the court had applications of the present kind by Dr Pelling or others in his position they should pause long before exercising its discretion in their favour. Although considered individually the collective effect would be to by-pass the Act.

He would refuse the application.

Lord Justice Waite and Lord Justice Waller agreed.

Solicitors: Daniel & Harris, Kilburn.

Terminating children's contact with parents

In re T (Minors) (Termination of contact: Discharge of order)

Before Lord Justice Simon Brown and Mr Justice Holman

[Judgment November 21]

On an application to discharge an order, made under section 34(4) of the Children Act 1989, authorising a local authority to terminate contact between the children in their care and the parents, the court should have two main interlocking considerations.

First, the extent to which circumstances had changed from when the order was originally made and, second, bearing those changes in mind, the extent to which it was appropriate to reinvestigate the central question whether contact should be terminated. The greater the apparent change in circumstances, the more intensively the court would be prepared to reconsider the desirability of leaving the section 34(4) order in place.

The Court of Appeal so stated allowing in part an appeal by the mother from the refusal by Judge Michael Baker, in Chichester County Court on April 10, 1996, of her application to discharge a section 34(4) order which he had made in December 1994 when making care orders in respect of her children.

Section 34 provides: "(4) On an application made by the authority or the child, the court may make an order authorising the authority to refuse to allow contact between the child and any person who is . . . named in the order."

Mr Roderic Wood, QC and Mrs Diane Barnett for the mother; Mr J. Michael Liebrecht for the local authority; Mr Stephen W. S. Cobb for the guardian ad litem; the father did not appear and was not represented.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that counsel for the mother sought to criticise the judge's approach.

He submitted that the section 34(4) order should never have been made in the first place: the local authority's care plans were not sufficiently advanced at that stage to justify such an order. In the result, he contended, the judge ought to have revoked it when the opportunity arose on the mother's application.

In his Lordship's view, a section 34(4) order should not be made (a) while there remained a possibility of rehabilitation of the child with the person in question, or (b) merely against the possibility that circumstances might change in such a way as to make termination of contact desirable. For an order to be justified, a probable need to terminate contact must be foreseeable and not too remote.

On that approach, his Lordship would regard the orders made by the judge in December 1994 as having been justifiable.

Given that the above was the correct approach to the making of a section 34(4) order, in what circumstances should it be discharged? More particularly, what, if any, inhibitions were there on a person's entitlement to seek such discharge?

Clearly such an application must be considered by the court with the child's welfare in mind as the paramount consideration, save only in the very limited circumstances provided for by section 91(17) when the court's leave was required.

That said, it was plain that there must be demonstrable some material change of circumstance between the making of the section 34(4) order and the application to discharge it. The courts were obviously entitled to screen out what were essentially no more than disguised appeals against the original orders.

His Lordship's conclusion was that the court should initially have two main interlocking considerations in mind: first, the extent to which circumstances had changed from when the order was originally made and second, bearing those changes in mind, the extent to which it now seemed appropriate to reinvestigate the central question.

The court should ask itself: where on the specrum of procedure should that particular application be placed? Clearly the greater the apparent change in circumstances, the more intensively would the court be prepared to reconsider the desirability of leaving the section 34(4) order in place.

In the present case, on the facts, his Lordship would dismiss the appeal so far as it concerned one of the children but would allow the appeal and discharge the section 34(4) order in respect of the other child.

Mr Justice Holman agreed.

Solicitors: Williams Macdougall & Campbell, Worthing; Mr E. M. Holdsworth, Chicester; Bennett Griffin & Partners, Worthing.

Investment company within Act

Cook (Inspector of Taxes) v Medway Housing Society Ltd

Before Mr Justice Lightman

[Judgment December 19]

A housing association, registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965, was an investment company within the meaning of section 130 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 and as such was entitled for corporation tax purposes to carry forward excess charges on income.

Mr Justice Lightman so held in a reserved judgment in the Chancery Division dismissing an appeal by the Crown brought by way of originating motion from the determination of a special commissioner (Dr J. F. Avery Jones) that had allowed an appeal by the Medway Housing Society Ltd against an assessment to corporation tax on its profits for the period to March 31, 1994, and a determination to the tax under section 41A of the Taxes Management Act 1970.

Section 130 of the 1988 Act provides: ". . . 'investment company' means any company whose business consists wholly or mainly in the making of investments and the principal part of whose income is derived therefrom. . ."

Mr Timothy Brennan for the Crown; Mr Kevin Prosser, QC, for the housing society.

MR JUSTICE LIGHTMAN said that the society was formed as an industrial and provident society to acquire the housing stock of Rochester upon Medway City Council. In 1990 it purchased, with loans from the council and from banks, the council's housing stock of 8,031 units for £77 million.

Thereafter it continued the council's housing policy but on more efficient lines with financing from the private sector, ensuring a surplus of rent over outgoings to result in the repayment of the loans over 19 years.

The question was whether the society was entitled to deduct and carry forward for deduction purposes the expenses of management, a term that included salaries and interest on borrowing, in computing its profits for corporation tax. It was only so entitled if it fell within the section 130 definition of an investment company.

It was common ground that the word "making" included "holding", that the society was a company and that the principal part of its income was derived from its housing portfolio. The issue was whether its business consisted wholly or mainly in the making of investments.

That involved two questions:

1 Did the housing portfolio in the hands of the society constitute an investment?

2 Was the business of the society that of making investments?

The term "investment" meant the laying out of moneys in anticipation of a profitable capital or income return. The society was not run to break even: the housing portfolio was intended over time to produce a profitable capital and income return.

If the society had been a commercial company there could be no doubt that the portfolio would constitute an investment and its business would be that of making or holding investments.

No different conclusion was to be reached because the society's object were set out in its rules. Those rules made clear that the society's objects were to provide housing to those in need at rents they could afford. That was entirely consistent with the society purchasing property with a view to making a profitable return on its purchases and lettings.

On principle the purpose and nature of the business of the society was that of holding investment in the form of the housing portfolio and none the less so because in so doing its object was to fulfil the social purpose of providing affordable housing.

The authorities justified and supported that conclusion. In determining what was the business of a company for the purposes of section 130 it was necessary to have regard to the quality, purpose and nature of the company and its activities and that included the full circumstances in which the relevant assets were acquired and retained, including the objects clause in the memorandum of association of a taxpayer and the objects of a society such as the instant one as revealed in its rules.

It was relevant to have regard to the actual activities carried on by the taxpayer at the relevant date, but if those were viewed without regard to its past history or future plans they might give only a partial and incomplete picture.

The critical question was whether the holding of assets to produce a profitable return was merely incidental to the carrying on of some other business or was the very business carried on by the taxpayer. In the instant case the very business of the society was the provision of housing at a return below the market return, but none the less a return producing a profit.

Solicitors: Solicitor of Inland Revenue; Trowers & Hamlins.

Needles phobia put child in danger

In re L (Patient: Non-consensual treatment)

Before Mr Justice Kirkwood

[Judgment December 13]

An extreme phobia against needles amounted to an involuntary compulsion sufficient to disable a patient from having the relevant mental competence to make treatment decisions and accordingly it was in the patient's best interests that the court should make a declaration that she should receive the treatment that her medical advisers were advocating

Mr Justice Kirkwood so held in the Family Division when making a declaration on an application as to the lawfulness of a medical procedure to which the patient had such a aversion that she was unable to give her consent, namely to be anaesthetised by means of an injection before being delivered of her child by emergency operation.

Mr Robert Francis, QC, for the applicant; Mr Michael Hinchcliffe, solicitor, as amicus curiae.

MR JUSTICE KIRKWOOD said that the severe phobia about needles put L's health, and that of her unborn child, in jeopardy.

It was accepted that L wished to be safely delivered of her baby and apparently she had consented to any medical procedure, including delivery by emergency caesarian section, necessary to achieve that except for penetration of her skin with a needle while she was conscious.

Medically, it was highly inadvisable to administer anaesthetic by any other method.

Tameside and Glossop Acute Services Trust v C. H. ([1996] 1 FLR 762) established that it was lawful to provide treatment necessary to save life and which was in the patient's best interest where that patient was unable to communicate a decision through lack of mental competence.

Here the extreme needle phobia amounted to an affliction of a psychological nature which compelled L against medical advice with such force that her own life was imperilled and she was rendered incapable of weighing relevant treatment in the balance to make a choice to the extent that she lacked the relevant mental competence to make the treatment decision.

Solicitors: Le Brasseur J. Tickle; Official Solicitor.

Limit to powers of county court

Devon County Council v B

Before Sir Stephen Brown, President, Lord Justice Pill and Sir Patrick Russell

[Judgment December 11]

Any jurisdiction the county court had derived solely from statute. It had no inherent jurisdiction of its own and therefore was not able to grant an injunction in care proceedings under section 31 of the Children Act 1989.

The Court of Appeal so held when, inter alia, allowing the appeal by a mother against the order of Judge Wigmore in Plymouth County Court on January 11, 1996 when, in support of a care order, he granted an injunction which purported to prevent the mother from entering the town in which the child was then living under the care plan.

Mr George Meredith for the local authority; Mr Richard Hickmet for the mother; Mr Lawrence Deegan for the father; Mr Michael Melville-Shreeve for the guardian ad litem.

THE PRESIDENT said that the local authority had applied to the county court judge for the injunction under the court's inherent jurisdiction.

However *D v D (County court jurisdiction: Injunctions)* ([1993] 2 FLR 802) had established that the county court had no inherent jurisdiction in relation to the exercise of statutory powers in children's cases nor did it have jurisdiction under either the Adoption Act 1976 or the Children Act 1989.

The provision of section 100(3) of the 1989 Act had not been drawn to the judge's attention but that clearly stated that "no application for any exercise of the court's inherent jurisdiction with respect to children may be made by a local authority unless the authority have obtained the leave of the court". That meant the High Court and here no leave had been obtained.

Confusion had arisen with custody cases pre-dating the 1989 Act where the county court did have statutory powers to grant an injunction for the protection of the child but these were not private law proceedings. Accordingly the injunction would be set aside and the appeal allowed.

Lord Justice Pill and Sir Patrick Russell agreed.

Solicitors: Mr Roger Gash, Exeter; Wolferstans, Plymouth; Stanton & Walker, Chesterfield; Gill Akaster, Plymouth.

Pension benefits for trustee

In re Landau (a Bankrupt)

Before Mr Justice Ferris

[Judgment December 16]

The benefits under a pension policy effected by a bankrupt before his bankruptcy but which became payable after his discharge did not amount to property which was acquired after the bankruptcy.

Those benefits were choses in action which comprised property belonging to the bankrupt at the commencement of the bankruptcy and vested in the trustee in bankruptcy by virtue of section 306 of the Insolvency Act 1986. They were therefore payable to the trustee in bankruptcy and not to the discharged bankrupt himself.

Mr Justice Ferris so held in the Bankruptcy Court of the Chancery Division on the application of Mr Michael Albert Pointer, the trustee in bankruptcy of Mr Ivan Aubrey Landau in regard to a pension policy with the National Provident Institution (NPI).

Miss Sandra Bristoll for Mr Pointer; Mr Guy Newey as amicus curiae; Mr Landau did not appear and was not represented.

MR JUSTICE FERRIS said that Mr Landau was born on February 9, 1929 and on April 26, 1982 he effected with NPI a policy in terms which had been approved by the Inland Revenue pursuant to section 226 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1970.

The policy was issued in consideration of monthly premiums payable until January 1999 and provided for the payment to Mr Landau on his survival to his seventieth birthday of an annuity of £4,424 with profits during the rest of his life.

In 1989 Mr Landau converted the policy into a fully paid policy under which no further premiums were payable and he also exercised his right to alter the date on which the annuity would become payable by stipulating that that would be his sixty-fifth birthday instead of his seventieth.

On May 3, 1990 a bankruptcy order was made in respect of Mr Landau and in December 1990 Mr Pointer was appointed his trustee in bankruptcy. The liabilities in bankruptcy exceeded £250,000, a substantial part of which remained unsatisfied.

In May 1993 Mr Landau was discharged from bankruptcy pursuant to section 279 of the 1986 Act. That discharge did not have any effect on the functions of the trustee in bankruptcy or the operation of the bankruptcy legislation in relation to Mr Landau's estate.

After he attained the age of 65 in 1994 Mr Landau sought to obtain the benefits payable under the policy. NPI communicated with Mr Pointer seeking his confirmation that he had no objection to that.

Mr Pointer gave the matter some consideration and ultimately contended that he was entitled to receive both the lump sum and the annuity and that he and not Mr Landau was entitled to exercise the rights of the annuitant.

The basis of that contention was that the policy became vested in the trustee in bankruptcy as part of Mr Landau's estate pursuant to section 306 of the 1986 Act.

Mr Landau resisted that contention. NPI generally supported Mr Pointer's view and paid to him the lump sum of £11,549. The annuity remained unpaid pending the outcome of the court proceedings.

As a matter of classification, Mr Landau's bundle of contractual rights under the policy constituted a chose in action and it had that character at the time of the bankruptcy order.

On the face of it therefore it fell under the definition of property and the fact that at the commencement of the bankruptcy nothing was immediately payable under the policy did not alter that in any way.

If it were right to regard the policy not as property belonging to Mr Landau at the commencement of his bankruptcy but as "property which has been acquired by . . . the bankrupt since the commencement of the bankruptcy" then it would not have vested in Mr Pointer but would be after acquired property which could only be obtained for Mr Landau's estate by means of a claim under section 307.

On that view of the nature of the policy it would only have been acquired by Mr Landau when he attained the age of 65 and by that time he had been discharged from bankruptcy and it was no longer possible for Mr Pointer to claim.

In his Lordship's judgment however, it was impossible to take that view of Mr Landau's interest in the policy. At the commencement of his bankruptcy he had a present right to compel NPI to make payments under the policy in the future.

That was an immediate chose in action. Mr Landau had in relation to the policy, the same chose in action on the date of the bankruptcy order as he had when he attained the age of 65 and that latter event did not result in anything being acquired by or devolving upon him.

Was the policy or the annuity payable under it caught by section 310 of the 1986 Act? If the benefit of the policy or the annuity was the income of the bankrupt for the purposes of section 310(7), then it could only be claimed by Mr Pointer from Mr Landau's estate by means of an income payments order under section 310(1), but section 310(6) prevented such an order being made now, since the bankruptcy had been discharged.

His Lordship said that on the ordinary meaning of the language used in section 310 he would have no doubt that the section had no application to property or income which vested in the trustee under section 306.

Property or income which so vested could not, on the face of it, be a "payment in the nature of income which is from time to time made to [the bankrupt] or which he from time to time becomes entitled", because it ought to be paid to the trustee and only the trustee was entitled to it.

Correspondingly the trustee had no need to obtain any order for the purpose of getting such income into the bankrupt's estate, for it would be payable to the trustee automatically by virtue of the vesting.

Doubt was introduced only by reason of the fact that the statutory predecessor of section 310 of the 1986 Act, which was section 51(2) of the Bankruptcy Act 1914, and the equivalent provisions of earlier bankruptcy statutes were held to apply both to property which vested in the trustee and to property which did not so vest.

The question was whether the reform of the law of insolvency by the Insolvency Acts of 1985 and 1986 had changed that. The 1985 Act followed upon, although it did not in all respects adopt, the recommendations of the Cork Committee *Report of the Review Committee on Insolvency Law and Practice* (Cmnd No 8558).

The vesting provisions of the 1914 Act were not commented upon by the committee but it did, however, recommend an important change in respect of the vesting of after acquired property.

The result was that by statute the bankrupt's estate was now defined in a way which confined it to property belonging to or vested in the bankrupt at the commencement of the bankruptcy and certain other property which was to be treated as comprised in the bankrupt's estate.

His Lordship concluded that the intellectual freight imported by earlier decisions was not such as to lead him to depart from the conclusion which he would otherwise reach as to the scope of section 310 on the basis of its language.

Therefore the right to payment of the annuity payable under the policy vested in Mr Pointer as part of Mr Landau's estate on his appointment as trustee in bankruptcy and section 310 had no application to it when it became payable.

The annuity was therefore payable to Mr Pointer as part of Mr Landau's estate and not to Mr Landau himself. After the right to receive the annuity became vested in him, Mr Pointer ws the only person entitled to exercise the options conferred by the policy as the annuitant.

It followed that Mr Pointer was entitled to commute part of the annuity for a lump sum, as he had done, and that lump sum was part of Mr Landau's estate just as the commuted part of the annuity would have been if it had been payable as the annuity.

Solicitors: Pothecary & Barratt; Treasury Solicitor.

Court's power to assess part-paid claim

Oak Tree Leisure Ltd v R. A. Fisk and Associates and Another

In a case involving concurrent and several claims where the plaintiff accepted a sum of money paid into court by one defendant and pursued the case against the second defendant, it was for the court to consider and assess the claim itself in the absence of an apportionment.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice McCowan, Lord Justice Peter Gibson and Lord Justice Hutchison) so held on November 26 when it allowed an appeal brought by the second defendant, W. Fearnley and Sons (Salford) Ltd against the decision of Judge Gilliand, QC, sitting on Official Referee's business, giving judgment in favour of the plaintiff for £2,928.

LORD JUSTICE PETER GIBSON said that the judge had relied on *Townsend v Stone Toms & Partners (a Firm)* ((1984) 27 BLR 26) to establish, inter alia, that it was not necessary to have evidence to put a value on the claim.

In his Lordship's judgment, the court in *Townsend* was clearly contemplating that there should be a proper assessment of the true value of the plaintiff's claim, based on evidence.

Where there had not been any apportionment under Order 22, rule 1(5) of the Rules of the Supreme Court and no material provided by the plaintiff to prove its claim, it was for the court to consider and assess the claim itself.

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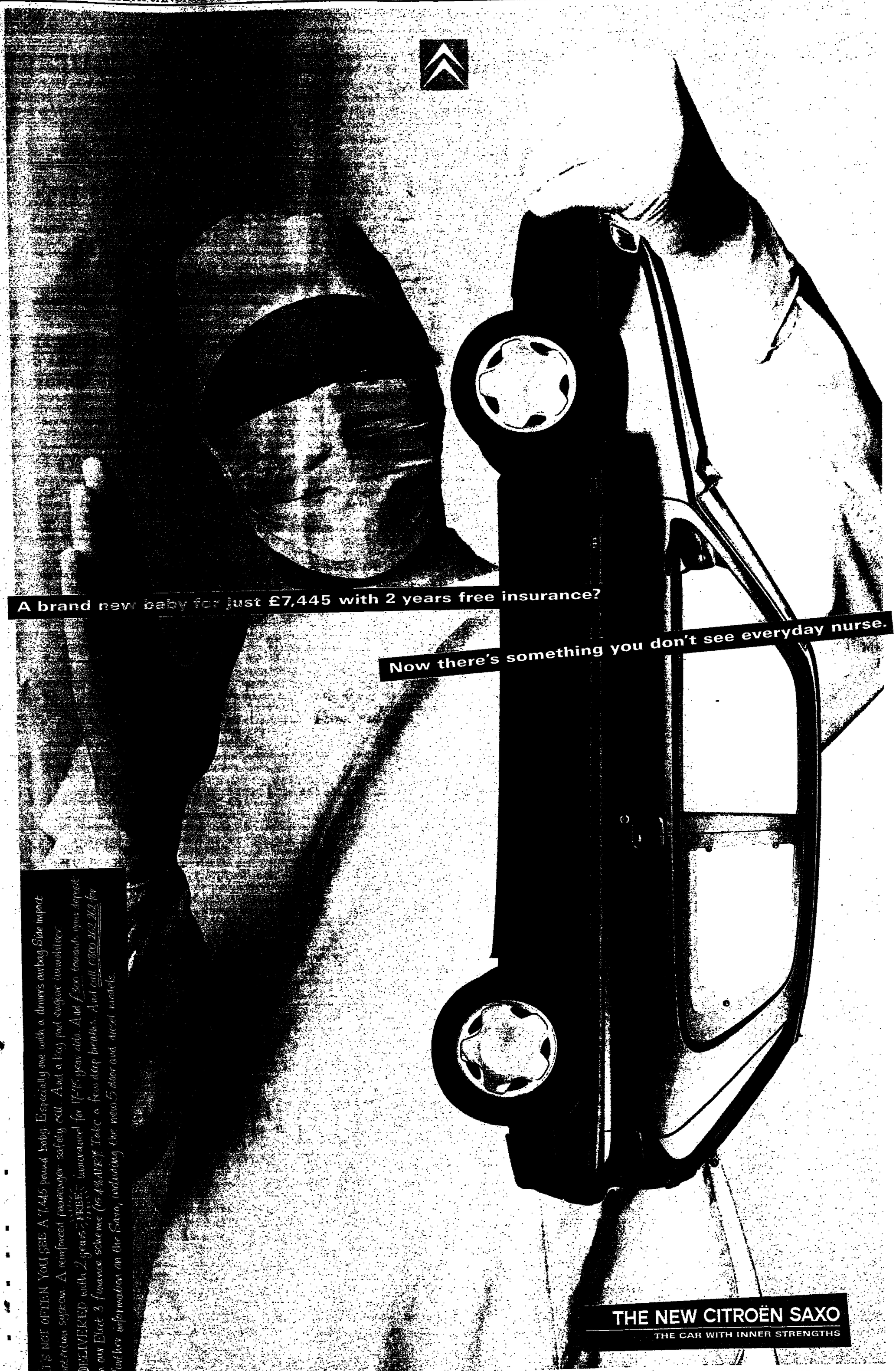

CAR SHOWN CITROËN SAXO 1.1IX 3 DOOR £7,445 ON THE ROAD, PRICE INCLUDES £625 ON THE ROAD COSTS (DELIVERY, NUMBER PLATES AND TWELVE MONTHS' ROAD FUND LICENCE). ON THE ROAD COSTS ARE SUSPENDED ON 1.1IX 3 DOOR AND 1.1ISX 3 DOOR MODELS ORDERED AND REGISTERED BETWEEN 1.12.96 AND 31.3.97. 1TWO YEARS COMPREHENSIVE INSURANCE SUBJECT TO TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF INSURER'S POLICY AND APPLIES TO 17-75 YEAR OLDS. INSURANCE OFFER INCLUDES ALL SAXO MODELS (EXCLUDING 1.6I). A SEPARATE SCHEME APPLIES TO DRIVERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND. TYPICAL ELECT 3 EXAMPLE FOR SAXO 1.1IX 3 DOOR: ELECT 3 PRICE £7,874.00. DEPOSIT £1,500.00 WHICH INCLUDES £500 PAID FOR BY CITROËN. 24 MONTHLY PAYMENTS [16.4% APR] OF £195.24 WITH FINAL PAYMENT OF £3,762. TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE £9,058.76. *FREE £500 DEPOSIT TOWARDS ELECT 3 FINANCE SCHEMES ONLY. ELECT 3 PRICE INCLUDES ON THE ROAD COSTS PLUS EXTENDED WARRANTY AND ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE. ELECT 3 IS AVAILABLE ONLY TO OVER 18 YEAR OLDS. FINANCE SUBJECT TO STATUS. A GUARANTEE MAY BE REQUIRED. FULL WRITTEN QUOTATIONS ON REQUEST FROM PSA FINANCE PLC, SICILIAN AVENUE, LONDON W1CA 2QQ. A FREE VODAFONE MOBILE PHONE IS AVAILABLE WITH ALL SAXO REGISTRATIONS. MOBILE PHONE OFFER EXCLUDES CHANNEL ISLANDS AND ISLE OF MAN. ELIGIBILITY SUBJECT TO AGE, STATUS AND PAYMENT OF A 12 MONTH LINE RENTAL AGREEMENT. DIGITAL TARIFFS WILL BE CHARGED AT £30 PLUS VAT FOR CONNECTION. ALL OFFERS APPLY TO RETAIL SALES OF CITROËN MODELS ORDERED AND REGISTERED BETWEEN 1.12.96 AND 31.3.97. PRICES CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS.

Tribulations of Euro presidency demand Dutch courage

The leaders of The Netherlands were left reeling the last time they were at the EU helm, Charles Bremner writes from Brussels. They believe that the next six months back in the job will demand "sobriety in difficult times"

A KING-SIZE headache settled on the Dutch Government today, with little chance of relief for another six months. The ailment, otherwise called the presidency of the European Union, is a drain on smaller states at the best of times, but The Netherlands' latest bout comes with complications.

Taking over the rotating honour from Ireland, the centre-left Government of Wim Kok must extract enough consensus from a malaise-stricken EU to deliver a new version of the Maastricht treaty in Amsterdam next June. With little accord among the 15 members on how to revamp the Union for enlargement, the job would be galling enough without the imminent British election.

At the same time, the Dutch, among the more fervent of EU members, must prevent wobbling in the far more ambitious project for monetary union as the candidates struggle to pass the year-long entrance exam which also opens today. Membership of the currency club will be awarded in spring next year on the basis of economic performance in 1997. To the dismay of monetary union enthusiasts, Britain will then hold the EU chair.

The Netherlands is still suffering from the hangover from its last time in the chair, in 1991, when it poured its federalist dreams into a draft of the Maastricht treaty which was then rejected by all the others. Mr Kok's team are now vying with each other to set low expectations. Hans van Mierlo, the integration-minded Foreign Minister, is playing presidential hopes in the minor key. "I would call it sobriety in difficult times," he said.

Like Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, who stepped into the British Euro-agony this week, Mr van Mierlo makes no bones about the implications of the British elections.

He is worried that Labour will fight with the Conservatives on Eurosceptic territory, limiting London's scope for negotiation in the weeks after the election. "If the European question is used negatively to win a maximum number of votes, it will be difficult to conclude a good treaty," he said. Like many of their colleagues across the EU, Dutch officials are privately hoping for a Tony Blair government. They do not imagine a Europhile revival from Labour and they share the conventional wisdom that a Blair administration would stay out of monetary union at the outset. But they believe that it would give enough ground on such issues as the national veto to get the "Maastricht II" treaty onto paper. The job may still, they acknowledge, have to be handed over to the Luxembourg presidency for completion in the autumn.

The "British problem" barely masks the discord among the rest over the big questions that are still nowhere near agreement despite nine months of treaty talks at the inter-governmental conference (IGC). These range from curbing the veto and centralising control over frontiers and foreign policy to revamping the commission and giving more power to the European Parliament.

Dispute over the Commission pits the smaller states, who want to keep their right to a seat in the Brussels executive, against the big ones which say the consequent jumbo commission would be a fiasco when the EU soon adds new members from the old communist bloc.

Under its mercurial Gaullist President, France is causing as much anxiety among the Dutch as Britain. Jacques Chirac has been running a feud with Mr Kok over The Netherlands' liberal drug laws since he took office and he could force the issue as the EU tries to harmonise crime and frontier policy at the IGC. President Chirac picked a new fight at last month's Dublin summit by signalling reluctance to endorse the widely expected appointment of Wim Duisenberg, a Dutchman, as chief of the European Central Bank, the future custodian of the single currency.

Beyond the Chirac quarrels, the Dutch, like many others, believe that the fate of monetary union and the push for integration will be fixed by events in France. In the climate of deep despair there over unemployment and the fate of the Gallic soul, France, it is feared, could turn against the goals of Maastricht and unhinge the partnership with Germany that drives the whole EU.

Milosevic: "cannot risk renewed sanctions"

'Bucharest scenario' warning to Milosevic

FROM ANTHONY LOYD IN BELGRADE

THE Government of President Milosevic of Serbia showed no sign of backing down to pro-democracy demonstrators in Belgrade yesterday, despite facing one of the largest crowds seen in the capital during 42 days of protest.

Tens of thousands of anti-government Serbs jammed the snowbound streets of Belgrade in a candlelit procession to protest against municipal election results that Mr Milosevic reversed in November.

Riot police remained on the streets in strength and reports that the administration was willing to compromise with recommendations by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, recognising the victory of opposition candidates in some municipalities, were soon discounted.

Vuk Draskovic, the opposition leader, said that Mr Milosevic faced a stark choice if he continued with repressive policies. "We [opposition MPs] would have no option but to give back all our political mandates. Milosevic would face international sanctions once more and then what would happen? There are already a million unemployed hungry Serbs here. Milosevic would face rioting across Serbia and disaster."

Mr Draskovic added: "He can choose our option and recognise our victory, or face the Bucharest scenario" — a reference to the violent fall of the Ceausescu regime.

Claxons, bands and whistles echoed around Belgrade, along with the sound of hundreds of chiming clocks, brought out by the demonstrators to toll symbolically for Mr Milosevic.

One elderly man said: "I am protesting here, and so is my son. We are prepared to see this through until the end so that our children will not find themselves as I do now, old and still demonstrating."

Iran cash funded Bosnian election victory, says CIA

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THE CIA was reported yesterday to have evidence that Iran secretly delivered at least half a million dollars in cash to the President of Bosnia before last September's election.

The agency has discovered that the Iranians gave Alija Izetbegovic, a fellow Muslim, at least two pieces of luggage each stuffed with $250,000 (£150,000) to help to pay for his victorious campaign, the report said.

The CIA believes that Mr Izetbegovic has been "co-opted by the Iranians" and is now "literally on their payroll", according to a classified report based on the agency's analysis of the issue obtained by the *Los Angeles Times*. Yet President Clinton agreed to release $100 million in American military aid to Bosnia in November even after the CIA uncovered the Iranian payments and reported the information to his policy-makers, the report said.

Mr Clinton had delayed the aid for months because of concerns about Iranian influence in Bosnia. He let it go ahead only after deciding that the Bosnians had yielded to US demands for the withdrawal of foreign fighters sponsored by Tehran and had sacked Hasan Cengic, the Deputy Defence Minister, because of his links to Iran.

One US official conceded that the Iranian cash payments to Mr Izetbegovic "gave us pause" and he was quietly told that they were "unacceptable". But Mr Clinton decided they were insufficiently serious to halt the flow of US helicopters, tanks, rifles and other military supplies intended to equip and train a restructured Bosnian army. Money for the programme had been pushed through Congress by Bob Dole before he resigned as Republican Senate leader to run for the presidency.

Still, the Iranian influence in Bosnia remains a vexing problem and the CIA and others in Washington are not convinced it has dwindled as much as the Clinton Administration would like to believe.

According to yesterday's report, electronic eavesdroppers and code-breakers at the National Security Agency reported as recently as September that, despite terms agreed in the Dayton peace accords, members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard remained active throughout Bosnia. The CIA reportedly blames Mr Clinton for encouraging the involvement in Bosnia of Iran, which Washington treats as a pariah nation for its sponsorship of international terrorism. He sanctioned Iranian arms shipments to Bosnia to save the Government from collapse in April 1994 when Western weapons deliveries were blocked.

The CIA estimates that the Iranians smuggled in about 14,000 tonnes between then and now, at least double the estimates made public by the State Department. Iranian Revolutionary Guard fighters and trainers poured into the country, doubling their presence to 400 or more.

A senior CIA officer was quoted as telling Congress in a secret deposition that the policy of allowing arms into Bosnia was of great assistance in enabling the Iranians to dig in and establish good relations with the Bosnian Government. Americans would live to regret the policy when their troops were blown up "as they no doubt will be before this thing is over", the officer said.

The report said that the dismissal of Mr Cengic had done little to reduce Iran's influence. Officials said at least one member of the Bosnian Muslim Cabinet was an agent of the Iranian intelligence service, according to the classified documents.

☐ **Sarajevo:** Bosnian Serbs, seeking to bolster their claims to statehood, are holding up mail destined for Serb-controlled territory, it was reported. *(Reuter)*

JOSÉ LUIS MAGANA/AP

Jorge de Jesús Ruiz threatens Cecilia Velázquez, a bank branch manager, during a police siege after his failed robbery attempt in Mexico City on Monday. After getting into a car with two hostages, Ruiz shot himself dead

WORLD SUMMARY

Reporters visit Peru hostages

Lima: For the first time since Peru's hostage crisis began, journalists were allowed yesterday into the Japanese Ambassador's residence. As they approached, rebel gunmen inside the compound shouted insults against the Government and denied that they were terrorists.

President Fujimori appeared to soften his earlier stance against the rebels when he said he would consider granting them safe passage out of the country if they released the captives and lay down their weapons. *(AP)*

Grand Canyon flights curbed

Washington: Further restrictions are to be imposed on tourist flights over the Grand Canyon in an effort to cut down noise disturbance (Ian Brodie writes). New rules include banning sightseeing flights from just before sunset until just after dawn. Operators must also replace nearly half their aircraft with quieter planes within four years, and cannot expand their fleets.

328 years' jail in Mafia cases

Palermo: A Sicilian court sentenced 38 mafiosi to a total of 328 years in jail in the final stage of a trial that started under the assassinated judges, Giovanni Falcone and Paolo Borsellino, more than a decade ago. The court in Palermo reached verdicts in several cases, including the so-called Pizza Connection heroin-smuggling ring. *(Reuter)*

Russians protest over arrests

New York: Russia protested to America after two diplomats assigned to the UN got into a fracas with New York police over a parking ticket. A Russian and a Belarussian had parked illegally and the police hauled the Russian from the car. The Belarussian then hit one of the officers and the two men were arrested briefly.

Tunnel rescuers free travellers

Tbilisi: Rescue teams working with bulldozers and armoured vehicles evacuated scores of travellers who had been trapped for days inside an avalanche-blocked tunnel in the Caucasus Mountains. The site was expected to be fully cleared of stranded motorists by today, officials said. *(AP)*

Polish resort loses allure as big spenders go West

FROM ROGER BOYES IN ZAKOPANE SOUTHERN POLAND

KROPOWKI Street in Zakopane glitters with all the authenticity of costume jewellery. The boutiques in this Polish mountain resort are full of sparkling, studded designer dresses and the shops are a match for Vienna or Baden Baden. But, as Jerzy Iwaskiewicz, a writer, says: "Beyond the high street and the tidy wooden chalets, Zakopane is going broke."

The wealthy of Central Europe are flourishing, but their riches are moving westwards and the traditional playgrounds of the rich are beginning to look a little faded. This is important because it was always assumed that the capitalist revolution would see prosperity trickle down from on high. Only that made palatable the great yawning gap between the new rich and the new poor.

There are beggars in the streets, Aids victims and homeless people; and there are scented women swaddled in mink stepping out of dark-windowed limousines. In this sense Polish cities are indistinguishable from London or New York.

But in Central Europe they have had to discard half a century of egalitarian propaganda and it still smarts that a New Year's Eve party in a Warsaw hotel can cost the equivalent of a doctor's monthly wage. A reporter making a new year round of shops in Warsaw was horrified to find a party dress priced at over £800. She made her excuses, she says, and left.

Zakopane, high in the Tatra mountains, was the St Moritz of the Warsaw Pact. The finer slopes may have been on the Slovak side of the border, but the Poles understood how to make a commercial magnet out of this small, charming village of goatherds and dog breeders.

Even under the communists, Kropowki Street became a place to flaunt Italian sunglasses and designer ski suits. Some of the wealthy roughed it, staying with richly rewarded local families, but nonetheless held their antic après ski parties in the luxurious Kasprowy Hotel perched above the village.

Under communism there was private wealth, some of it legally acquired. Farming was in private hands and greenhouse owners, growing flowers or tomatoes, prospered. So did boutique owners, record producers, artists with overseas contracts, fashion designers, confectioners, silk manufacturers, money changers and gynaecologists with private abortion facilities.

Their social season could be charted easily: summer in the dachas around the Mazurian lakes, winter in Zakopane, parties in the Polish capital's renowned Architects' Club. In the most miserable days of martial law, when meat and sugar were rationed and lavatory paper was a rarity, there were five Rolls-Royces purring around the country.

Now the world has changed and you notice it quickly in Zakopane. "The money has moved to the Alps," Iwaskiewicz, a long-time visitor to the resort, says. There are a few concessions to Western trends — young snowboarders in baggy trousers are in vogue — but on the whole Zakopane has lost its fizz. The wealthy of Central Europe see no point in spending their cash in the East. Increasingly they buy houses in Andalusia and Kensington and winter in South Africa or Gstaad, Switzerland.

Zakopane prices remain out of reach of ordinary Poles and even the educated middle classes who could find low-cost niches outside the resort are giving up or confining their trips to five days instead of a fortnight. It is a similar story in other resorts. Mragowo, an exclusive hotel in the Mazurian lakes, once an attraction for rich weekending Poles, is now dependant on German tourists searching nostalgically for what they regard as their lost lands.

After the revolutions of 1989-90, underground wealth edged above the surface. The 50 richest Poles, listed in 1991, included men (no women) with interests in meat processing, former racing drivers and sports stars who had managed to grab Western car dealerships, and building magnates. Now five years on, some of these people are in deep water.

The magazine *Sukces* this month lists 50 wealthy businessmen, starting with a property dealer accused of embezzling some hundreds of thousands of pounds, who have strayed from the straight and narrow. The police are hunting for the absconding developer and five of the 50 are living abroad; 15 are under arrest. At least half a dozen of those mentioned on the "anti-list" were regarded five years ago as the winners rather than the villains of the capitalist revolution.

What has changed is that capitalism is becoming more staid in Central Europe and works increasingly within legal confines. In 1991, as in Russia today, the social equation in Central Europe was that wealth bought power. In 1997, the formula is that wealth buys respectability. A dozen private schools are well established in Poland, although there is an increasing trend for wealthy people to send their children to British public schools.

The great difference between the Polish rich of a decade ago and the rich of today is income tax: for the most part it is now paid without question as part of the price of upward mobility.

Veterans outraged by medals of dishonour

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE Pentagon has dropped America's principal maker of military decorations after the family-owned firm sold unauthorised copies of the nation's highest honour.

HLI Lordship Industries, based in New York, produced 300 extra Medals of Honour for sale to collectors at $75 (£45) each. The medal has been awarded 3,401 times for extraordinary valour in combat since its creation by Congress in 1861, mostly posthumously. Only 170 living servicemen possess the award. The maximum penalty for unauthorised wearing of the decoration was raised recently to a year in prison.

Lordship Industries had been the medal's sole authorised manufacturer since the late 1970s and its most recent contract was for 600 medals — but it made 900. The extras were discovered by an off-duty FBI agent, a former US Navy SeaL who spotted a pair of them on sale while browsing at a military memorabilia fair in New Jersey.

The company pleaded guilty to making false medals. Its lawyer admitted that two of the three brothers who ran the company had known about the forgery, but said they had since been removed and that none of the firm's 120 employees had been involved.

A court in New Jersey imposed the maximum fine of $80,000 and ordered the company to repay the $22,500 it had earned from the sale of the unauthorised medals. "True Medal of Honour recipients and their families have a right to be outraged by their conduct," District Judge William Bassler said.

"It is a theft of our respect. It is a rape of our ideals," said Paul Bucha, a retired army captain and a president of the Congressional Medal of Honour Society, who earned his decoration in Vietnam.

Weakened Gingrich seeks new term

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

A DEFIANT Newt Gingrich has decided to seek re-election as Speaker of the House of Representatives next Tuesday, even if his punishment for ethics violations has not been decided by then.

The Republican leader's determination to run was announced yesterday as his allies strove to shore up support and Democrats continued to demand his resignation.

The Republican leadership organised a mass conference call for rank-and-file members to reinforce solidarity after one backbencher, Michael Forbes of New York, declared he would not vote for Mr Gingrich. A former Gingrich loyalist, he said dynamic leadership was needed at the start of the new Congress from someone who was not weakened by the ethics struggle.

At least ten other House Republicans have said they are unsure whether they will support Mr Gingrich. His closest advisers privately expect more defections but still believe he will survive. It would need 20 Republicans out of 227 to abstain for him to be defeated.

Mr Gingrich himself, normally so loquacious, remained silent and out of sight as the struggle over his future raged. Columnists and editorials have taken up both sides of the argument, with many noting it would be ironic for Mr Gingrich to be driven from office over one ethics issue while President Clinton, who faces investigations into several alleged abuses of power, remains unscathed.

Twelve days ago Mr Gingrich acknowledged breaking House ethics rules by providing inaccurate information to investigators and failing to ensure that his televised college course complied with laws barring the use of tax-exempt charitable funds for a partisan political project. Republican leaders immediately described the violation as no more than a misdemeanour and confidently announced that Mr Gingrich would be re-elected as Speaker. In the meantime, they said, the ethics committee would meet to decide his punishment, which they implied would amount to no more than a slap on the wrist.

This plan has come partially unravelled. The ethics committee, evenly balanced between Republicans and Democrats, has been unable to schedule a quick meeting to dispose of the complaint.

Even worse for the Republicans, Jim McDermott, the committee's leading Democrat, has decreed that in spite of Mr Gingrich's admission of guilt, the matter cannot be dealt with in a matter of hours as the Speaker and his supporters had hoped.

Time will be needed for the four ethics members who carried out the investigation to brief the other six about the case. In short, the Democrats are determined that the committee's work will not be finished before the vote next Tuesday.

Mr Gingrich being sworn in for the first time in 1994

Diamond deal with Moscow loses glitter

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

ONE of the most enduring and extraordinary partnerships in modern Russian history formally came to a close last night when De Beers, the South African diamond company, terminated its contract to sell Russian diamonds on the world market.

In a move with potentially damaging effects on the price of diamonds, and the cartel controlled by De Beers, the company said that from today it would not longer recognise the contract to sell Russia's rough diamonds.

"From January our formal commitment falls away," said Raymond Clark, the De Beers representative in Moscow. He added that the company would continue to buy Russian diamonds, but outside the formal relationship which had endured for nearly 40 years.

Until yesterday, Russia's annual sale of diamonds, through De Beers' London-based Central Selling Organisation, was valued at £727 million, about one quarter of the cartel's annual sales.

De Beers was forced to act after months of largely fruitless negotiations with the Russian authorities on a new agreement. Under the old terms, Russia was supposed to sell 95 per cent of its gem-quality diamonds to De Beers. However, the South Africans became increasingly frustrated by the chaotic state of the Russian industry and claimed that substantial "leakages" of Russian stones were turning up on the world market.

The irony is that De Beers had a far more successful trading relationship with Moscow when the two sides were supposedly implacable ideological foes, with South Africa under white minority rule and the Kremlin controlled by the Communists.

Privately, industry analysts believe that a fresh agreement is possible.

Peking chief Jiang fears losing grip on power

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN HONG KONG

WERE he to die now, Deng Xiaoping's passing could not come at a worse time for China's present de facto leader, 70-year-old Jiang Zemin, who wears the three caps of President, Communist Party chief and top military man as chairman of the military affairs commission.

Mr Jiang, a lacklustre engineer, has been named the "core" of the third generation of leadership — after Mao and Mr Deng — so his succession is not in any real doubt if Mr Deng should succumb soon.

But 1997 could be host to three potentially destabilising events, observers say. One is the death of Mr Deng, a titanic political figure who from a firm comrade-in-arms of Mao on the Long March became a believer in free enterprise — but not political freedoms — and transformed China with economic reforms in 1979.

The second is the transfer of Hong Kong's sovereignty after 150 years from Britain to China at midnight on June 30. Many Chinese will be itching for the same future minor liberties, should they materialise, that are promised to the former British colony under the operation of "one country, two systems", particularly the freedom to have more than one child. There could also be a road rush of Chinese hoping for a part in Hong Kong's prosperity.

The third potentially destabilising, but not as the vitally important fifteenth party congress due in October, when Mr Jiang will cement his supporters in power, and lead the way in planning for China's future into the new millennium. It will be a future less economically free-wheeling than under Mr Deng, who once said that "to get rich is glorious". It will, though, be just as politically repressive as Mr Jiang strives to retain his hold on power by promoting members of his "Shanghai Mafia" from the city he served as party chief.

"This coming year is the most important in China for a long time," said one long-serving diplomat in Peking recently. "A lot could happen, though Jiang is likely to survive the storms for the present. However, his grip on power in Deng's waning years is not as strong as that enjoyed formerly by past leaders, so Deng's death now would be difficult for him. There is no doubt that Deng is ill, and, as newspapers reported here in October, he may well have lost his ability to hear and even to walk and to converse."

Li Peng, the unpopular Premier, who is credited with the violent suppression of the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests in 1989, is due to retire in 1998 and is not regarded as a candidate for power, and members of Mr Deng's family have recently lost influence, envoys say.

There are few obvious challengers, though Mr Jiang gives every indication of feeling insecure. Indeed, it is this insecurity that is partly behind the launch of his current campaign of "spiritual civilisation", under which political and cultural life has come under closer party control.

Jiang: has doubts about succeeding Deng

China eager to end colonial 'disgrace'

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

CHINA'S resumption of sovereignty over Hong Kong this year will finally 'eliminate a 100-year-old "national disgrace" on the country's doorstep, President Jiang Zemin said yesterday in a new year address.

In a broadcast aimed at overseas listeners of China Radio International, Mr Jiang also spelt out a warning to Taiwan to stay in line in 1997.

"The return of Hong Kong to the motherland will wash away a century-old national disgrace and signal a significant victory in the Chinese people's struggle toward national reunification," said Mr Jiang, who is also the General Secretary of the Communist Party.

The President emphasised that Hong Kong's status as an international finance, trade and transport hub would remain unchanged after the British colony reverts to Chinese rule on July 1.

"It is my belief that our Hong Kong compatriots, after becoming the masters of their own affairs, will make Hong Kong even more prosperous," he said.

Mr Jiang's new year message also carried a stern warning to the authorities in nationalist Taiwan to avoid any repetition of their overseas trips in 1996 aimed at breaking the island's diplomatic isolation.

"The Taiwan authorities are well advised to respect national interests, to cease all activities designed to split the motherland, and to make practical moves toward the improvement of cross-straits relations," Mr Jiang said.

Achieving reunification at the earliest possible date was in the interests of both mainlanders and Taiwanese. "We welcome Taiwanese people of all circles to raise beneficial ideas and suggestions on peaceful reunification," Mr Jiang said.

President Lee Teng-hui of Taiwan meanwhile reiterated an appeal for Peking to "respond reasonably" to his peace proposals. He said his Government would not give up its efforts to achieve an end to hostilities, despite increased moves by China to isolate Taiwan after Mr Lee's controversial visit to the US in 1995. That trip was interpreted by Peking as an attempt by Taiwan to promote its independence.

Row flares over fate of Olympic cauldron axed by the Braves

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

A CONTROVERSY every bit as hot as the Olympic flame has flared up about the fate of the "cauldron" used at last summer's Games in Atlanta.

The future of the scaffolding-like structure, containing the flame lit by Muhammad Ali in the opening ceremony before a worldwide television audience, is up in the air because the stadium's new operators do not want to take responsibility for it.

The Olympic stadium is being converted into a baseball field for the Atlanta Braves and will be renamed Turner Field after the team's owner, Ted Turner, the founder of the Cable News Network.

Anxious about security and the cost of maintenance and insurance, the Braves say they do not want the cauldron and have suggested that the tower should be moved, possibly to Centennial Park, the nearby brick plaza where a bomb exploded during the Olympics.

Siah Armajani, who designed the cauldron, has said that he would prefer it to be destroyed rather than moved. "If they want to move it, they should take it down," he said.

His protest has been joined by activists in the rundown Summerhill neighbourhood next to the stadium who say it could lure tourists to the area. "If we move it, we are going to lose the history," Douglas Dean, a community leader, said. A local woman has set up a Keep the Cauldron committee to raise money to preserve the monument and an Atlanta lawyer has said that he would finance its upkeep if he could mount a plaque on it honouring his immigrant Lebanese grandfather.

The dispute is not the first to engulf the cauldron. Shortly after the Olympics, American Indians protested when a giant tomahawk axe, the symbol of the Atlanta Braves, was erected on the structure in what they saw as a racist insult.

Joe Frazier, the former world heavyweight boxing champion, sparked another furore when he suggested that he would have been happy to see Ali, his former rival who now suffers from Parkinson's disease, fall into the cauldron when he lit it.

MARK BAKER/REUTER

Australia's biggest ever firework display lights up Sydney Harbour Bridge to welcome in the New Year. Organisers described the setting-off of 16,654 fireworks from 25 different sites around the city as a dress rehearsal for 2000. The 40-minute spectacular, which cost £500,000, could be seen more than 30 miles away

60 bodies found after train blast

Sensapani: Rescuers recovered about 60 bodies from a crowded train ripped apart by two bomb blasts in northeastern India. The authorities, who blamed tribal guerrillas for the attack, said yesterday that they expected to find more victims in the wreckage.

Three coaches were destroyed in the blasts after the train left Kokrajhar in Assam state for Delhi on Monday, the police said. A total of 63 injured people were taken to hospital. *(Reuter)*

Envoy quitting

Seoul: James Laney, the US Ambassador to South Korea, said he had submitted his resignation for personal reasons. He described the Korean-American alliance as the "strongest ever". *(Reuter)*

Jailing anger

Delhi: Tibet's government-in-exile condemned an 18-year jail term for Ngawang Choephel, a Tibetan music scholar, imposed by China for alleged spying and demanded his release. *(Reuter)*

Strikes halted

Seoul: South Korean unions marked the new year holidays by calling off strikes over a law that would strengthen employers' rights, but threatened to wage fresh action in the public sector. *(Reuter)*

Burma arrests

Rangoon: Lieutenant-General Khin Nyunt, of the Burmese junta, said 47 political activists were arrested after unrest, and that communists and opposition politicians wanted to destabilise Burma. *(Reuter)*

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Supermodel Linda Evangelista finds the new MaxMara collection worth getting out of bed for, reports **Grace Bradberry**

Why Linda wears the trousers

In 1951, Achille Maramotti, an Italian lawyer, saw pictures of Audrey Hepburn in designs by the French couturier Hubert de Givenchy. Inspired by Hepburn's gamine elegance, and by the skill of his mother, who ran a professional sewing school, Maramotti decided to create his own fashion label.

The first collection consisted of one coat and two jackets, all three cut with clean lines. Nothing revolutionary, you might think, yet MaxMara was the first Italian fashion house to create ready-to-wear.

Today, of course, we are deluged by labels. MaxMara stands for the reverse of autocratic fashion culture. Even the label's most devoted customers do not know the name of the figure-head designer, and that is because there is no such person. In-house designers are guided by outside consultants, some of them big names. Karl Lagerfeld, for example, was a collaborator in the Seventies, and Dolce & Gabbana contributed in the Eighties. The names are never divulged at the time. The collections are intended to dovetail with women's lifestyles. They do not represent readymade lifestyles in the way that a Gucci outfit might.

This philosophy explains the number of "diffusion" lines. The MaxMara collection is aimed at working women looking for glamorous, well-cut clothes that will last for several seasons. They want their wardrobes to be recognisably modern, but not trendy. Then there are 22 other labels, of which the best known are Weekend by MaxMara, Marella, I Blues, Sportmax and Pennyblack. About 17 are sold in Britain.

None of the labels is associated with a particular film star, or celebrity. Women as diverse as Isabella Rossellini and Liv Tyler, the young star of the Bertolucci film *Stealing Beauty*, have been seen wearing mainline MaxMara. Luigi Maramotti, son of Achille, and the company's managing director, has remarked that he would rather see a picture of Rossellini passing through Milan airport in a MaxMara coat, than an actress standing up at the Oscars in a dress she has been sponsored to wear.

Swimming against the current fashion tide, MaxMara has also refused to go retro. The spring/summer 1997 collection contained most of the directional items included by other designers. There were wide-legged trouser suits, colonial-inspired jackets, tunic tops, asymmetrical neck-lines and abstract prints. But none had an obvious period feel. This was deliberate. "I don't think retro can work because nobody wants to look back, everyone wants to look into the future," Giorgio Guidotti, MaxMara's art director, says.

"We have a contemporary woman who travels and wants to be modern, to have a personality. She doesn't want to look like Evita one season and Cleopatra the next."

The advertising campaign, featuring Linda Evangelista photographed by Steven Meisel, is intended to reflect this. Evangelista was allowed to select her outfits. She fell in love with the trouser suits.

It is impossible to create images without some reference to the past, and in this case the inspiration was Louise Brooks and the Twenties. "But what we definitely didn't want was retro," says Guidotti — the distinction is between the past as a reference point, and as a pattern book. The self-conscious Seventies styling of some the more cutting-edge designers is anathema to the MaxMara ethos.

Far left: cream short-sleeve Nehru-collar jacket and matching trousers, £408

Main picture: charcoal wool check tie jacket and trousers, £500

Left: navy double-breasted pinstripe tailored jacket £330 and matching trousers £120; navy shirt £98

Below: wine-red Nehru collar sleeveless silk shirt, £270; mulberry-coloured trousers, £321

Photographer: STEVEN MEISEL
Model: Linda Evangelista
Hair and make-up: Garren and Lauren Mercier

Maxmara stockists:
32 Sloane Street, SW1, 0171-235 7941
153 New Bond Street, W1, 0171-491 4748
Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, 0171-235 5000
Harrods, Knightsbridge, 0171-730 1234
Selfridges, W1, 0171-629 1234
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A changing room of one's own

There are few times when a woman feels herself quite so much the victim of the consumer society as when she enters a high street changing room. Even in the more expensive stores, the conditions are frequently cramped, and offer little in the way of privacy.

Why is it that the curtains are never quite wide enough for the space? Why do the doors not meet the ceiling? And why are so many changing rooms without mirrors, forcing us to parade out in front of other people's husbands and boyfriends (and, if we're gluttons for punishment, our own)? As Virginia Woolf might have written had she shopped at Kookai, all one wants is a changing room of one's own. It's really no wonder that women become conspiracy theorists when it comes to changing rooms. If the mirrors aren't warped then the lighting is deceptive. Do I really look this good — or, more often, this bad? And if you can't find fault with either of those, then there's always the suspicion that the assistants are trained to harry people out before they notice the obvious design flaws.

> 'Women are more automated. They want everything ordered'

Hugo Tugman, the architect behind several new shops, including the new Jigsaw Menswear in Manchester, is perplexed by the accusations of devious design: "One of the modern myths is that we've got it all worked out. It's a lot more based on gut feel."

Just to get the record straight, Tugman's changing rooms all contain mirrors, mounted flat against the wall with no attempt to distort the image. But not all his cubicles will be as private as the consumer might like, because while customers would doubtless like to change behind padlocked iron doors, retailers are into "permeability".

At the very least shop assistants want to know if there is anybody in there. If retailers think they can get away with it, they will deprive customers of individual mirrors. "There's always a debate about whether it's good to have them *in* the changing rooms," says Tugman. "Some retailers are very upfront and want to get at the customers. That either means having them wander out, or making the doors so small you can peak over the top."

Men won't put up with the same degree of "permeability" as women. "The psychology of shopping is very different," explains Tugman. "Women are more automated. They want everything to be ordered. Men want something more relaxed and unintimidating."

In Jigsaw Menswear in Manchester the doors go from floor to ceiling, though they are constructed from vertical slats, angled to let the light in: "The assistants could tell if anyone was in there and could speak through the slats." But men have the luxury of being able to struggle into their trousers without someone flinging back a curtain to ask: "Everything all right in there?"

Only one minor deception has been practised on the men of Manchester: the ceiling is pink, and so a warm light diffuses the store. Many customers would doubtless recoil at the idea that they were seeing their clothes in rose-tinted mirrors, but apparently they don't notice.

What most of us crave, of course, is daylight. Tugman insists that architects simply cannot simulate this in a shop: "You can get light fittings that look like daylight, and they make you look like death. Daylight is so powerful you can never recreate it with artificial light."

Instead, Tugman favours warm white lights — not so cold as to render one corpse-like, but not too cosy either: "It needs to look chic." And he never puts spotlights directly above the head: "Strong directional light can be very unpleasant."

More unpleasant than *being* in a changing room, however, is queueing for one, which explains why so few contain so much as a stool. No wonder some women now resort to the ruse of "unshopping" — buying several items hurriedly, then taking most of them back within the 14-day grace period.

GRACE BRADBERRY
STYLE EDITOR

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A plea from the heart for 1997

I don't want riches, I don't want flash cars — I just want to be tidy

Drowning in the rising tide of chaos — the only way to get yourself out of a mess such as this, Nigella Lawson believes, is to undergo a complete personality change

I don't believe in new year resolutions any more than I believe in Valentine's Day cards: if you need the impetus of an officially designated day to show either your resolve or your affection then neither can be worth registering. But this year I falter.

Today is the day I start being tidy. The fact that I decided this some two weeks ago, is, I do rather pathetically see, a sure sign of my own bad faith.

If I really were positive about changing my depressingly messy ways, I would have started clearing up as soon as I'd made the decision, rather than postdating it.

This is the trouble, though, with being a messy person. One feels so engulfed by impending chaos that even to begin to put a bit of order into one's life is frightening.

Tidying up requires that one throws oneself into the mess, and how can one hurl oneself into the abyss when even standing on the edge peering in is terrifying?

Nigella Lawson

Not all messy people feel like that. Some don't even notice the squalor in which they live. Others actively prefer it. I, unfortunately, am a messy person who hates mess.

How hard, you may ask, can it be, then, to tidy up? But being messy is like being fat: those who consider themselves to have a weight problem know that the way to solve it is to eat less, but somehow in practice it doesn't feel that simple.

If I, for example, found it easy enough to tidy up, I wouldn't be so trapped in the mess of my own making now, just as those who have no trouble eating sensibly tend not to put on weight in the first place.

I think there is a further connection, notionally speaking, between being overweight and being messy. It's about control, or lack of it. However disparagingly we might speak about those rigorously disciplined people who exercise absolute control on themselves and their environment, we tend to admire them, in, admittedly, an envious fashion.

This is, after all, the age of the control freak, and even if there is something intimidating and rather un-cosy about the sort of person who never has a pound or a piece of paper out of place, it is an uncosiness that has a confounding way of looking like an accomplishment.

Why fat, on the other hand, inspires such loathing, out of proportion to any mere aesthetic dismay, is that it smacks of lack of restraint, of a dreaded incontinence. And it's the same with mess.

I've noticed that people who are tidy often draw attention to it in an awful-me sort of way, that implies that although they're paying lip-service to the notion of neatness as a neurosis, secretly they are pleased with their orderliness, and know we're impressed, too.

Victoria Wood, for example, can make jokes about being the sad sort of character who has to get her knicker drawer sorted and catalogued before she can do any work because the outcome of such obsessive behaviour is that everything will be tidy, and that is an uncontested good.

To go back to the fat-messy analogy I'd say that, in a similar way, we have more sympathy for anorexics than we do for compulsive eaters. Someone whose mental disorder shows itself in not eating at least gets thin (and I promise that's how a lot of people think: if it sounds mad, it may be, but still don't write to me as if it's what I think) but someone whose unhappiness makes them eat too much just gets fat, and that is where we lose sympathy. We're too appalled to be concerned.

> This problem is all about control, or at any rate about the lack of it

But there it is: I have resolved this New Year's Day to shed several pounds' worth of scribbled-on envelopes, out-of-date press releases, shopping lists, phone messages and faxes — and this is just in my study. The rest of the house is groaning under the weight of old clothes, old letters and invitations (again), lost socks and a clutter so dispiriting even to contemplate, that I won't.

Tidying up is not alone the answer, I do see that. Experience has taught me that the relief is short-lived. A week or so after one of our sporadic blitzes, the piles start mounding up again.

What is needed is a personality change. That would be dangerous, of course. The dynamic works at present if only because I am married to someone messy enough to add to the confusion, to contribute significantly to the hellishness of it all, but sufficiently unmessy to be able to take it all in hand ocasionally and — much more important — to be able, always, to feel that the fault is really mine.

Just as relationships can founder when alcoholics dry out, so I wonder whether it would be dangerous to try to tidy up my act.

That, again, is a delaying tactic. But the trouble with being seriously untidy is that it is hard to see where to start. I will be able to answer my letters (and to those of you who have been good enough to write, I promise I will) once I've done my accounts. Or that's what I tell myself. And I'm going to do my accounts soon. Or that is what I tell my accountant.

Some weeks ago I mentioned, for some reason, that I wore the same thing to more or less every party I went to. I have come to the conclusion, after brutally honest reflection on the subject, that the real reason is probably because it's the only outfit I can lay my hands on. Most of my clothes lie in a black dusty fug at the bottom of the wardrobe, or are still in hopefully folded piles on top of the washing machine, waiting, in vain, to be ironed.

I don't think I am quite an irredeemable slut. I keep myself and my kitchen clean, but I need a great deal of help to keep the chaos at bay. I have come to the conclusion that my resolution to become a tidy person will be realised only if first I resolve rather energetically to be come a rich one. If I had the money (and believe me, it would take a lot) I believe I could pay myself out of this mess.

I once went on holiday, to stay with friends who'd rented a house complete with a retinue of staff. She cooked, her husband made drinks and their nieces did the cleaning, washing and ironing. Believe me, there wasn't the opportunity to be messy. I have never wanted a grand life, or to be rich, but now I can see the point. I don't want flash cars or clothes. I don't want several large houses and I don't want to go shopping all day (well, maybe just on some days) but what I would love is to have several people very well paid (I wouldn't want to exploit anyone, and the fair wage would have to be a large one) to look after me. And I mean look after: I need someone who can decide which drawer my tights should go in and then make it their life's work to keep them there.

In the meantime though, I do see, I am just going to have to go upstairs and tidy up — and I may be some time.

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When clothes make the man

Gifts reveal your true self, **Magnus Linklater** says

I now have three identical scarves, all Christmas presents from my mother. They are no ordinary scarves. They are of double thick wool, with Viking runes on them, and they have bobbles at either end. I have long considered taking them back, but the Orkney Islands are a long way to go. Instead they take up an absurd amount of space. The idea of wearing them is inconceivable.

From time to time I have wondered why my mother has so completely failed to appreciate my innate good taste, persisting in giving me the kind of garb that is not only a sartorial disaster, but is so clearly not my style. I see myself as a rather raffish dresser, unconventional but elegant, with clothes that acknowledge fashion in an airy sort of way without ever being trapped by it. That at least is the intention.

True, I occasionally fall short of my own demanding standards. I remember one particular moment of disillusion when, as an undergraduate at Cambridge, I acquired an olive-green French corduroy jacket, edged in leather, which I wore with a black polo-neck and drainpipe jeans — the last word in *rive gauche* chic: Jean-Paul Belmondo would have died for it. Glancing at myself in a shop window, I suddenly saw something rather appalling: a shambling figure with short, spindly legs, wearing what looked like an over-sized donkey-jacket — not so much Belmondo as Groucho Marx. I immediately cancelled all public appearances and sat down to reassess, not just my wardrobe but my life.

Nevertheless, there have been moments of triumph. One thinks instinctively of a certain brushed denim suit from John Stephen, circa 1965, so tight around the crotch one could only wear it for two hours. I believe they still talk of it at the Flamingo Club.

However, I digress. The point at issue is why my mother, who should know me reasonably well, has so misread my character. It could, of course, be simple eccentricity, or plain forgetfulness. She is, after all, 86, and might be forgiven for having acquired elements of both. Nevertheless, in all other respects she is as sharp as a knife. Instead I have begun to wonder whether there might be some kind of sub-Freudian message here. Perhaps she thinks that this is really the person I am deep down. That inside this casual boulevardier with the *Place St Michel* swagger, there is a tubby, muffled up, jolly, bucolic type trying to get out.

And then an even worse thought struck me. Perhaps she has sensed that this is the kind of person I am turning into anyway; perhaps she is merely helping to speed the process. I raced to my wardrobe to carry out an immediate audit. What I found there came as a nasty shock. I discovered, not one, but two blazers with shiny brass buttons. There was a pair of brown, clumpy shoes, looking distinctly sensible. A stout jacket made of Harris Tweed only just hid a pair of yellow corduroy trousers, with room for growth around the waist. There was a cloth cap, a golfing jersey. There was ... Oh God ... a cardigan.

That night I had a terrible dream. I was preparing to go out, and had donned my blazer, yellow corduroy trousers, clumpy shoes and cloth cap. I turned and saw a thick woollen scarf with Viking runes and large bobbles at either end. I felt instinctively that it was right for me. With a warm glow of pleasure I reached out to pick it up, and at that point, I woke up.

And it was true.

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■ THEATRE 1

Jessica Lange triumphs in her West End debut, as Blanche DuBois in *A Streetcar Named Desire*

■ THEATRE 2

But *Yule Better Change*, Michael McArdle's musical version of Scrooge, is a far from uplifting experience

THE TIMES ARTS

■ DANCE

The Royal Ballet celebrates the Christmas season in fine style with Ashton's *Cinderella*

■ RISING STAR

Not too long ago, Emily McKenzie was working as a waitress in Oxford Street. Now she's starring in a panto

THEATRE: A Blanche to remember from Jessica Lange; a night to forget with Scrooge and Bob Marley

Life in the killing jar

A Streetcar Named Desire
Haymarket

Tennessee Williams's stage directions say that Blanche DuBois, with her white dress and scattered manner, resembles a moth. He might more generously have compared the protagonist of his *Streetcar Named Desire* to a butterfly that has unwisely ventured into an aviary dominated by a bird of prey. Certainly that was the comparison that seemed best to sum up Jessica Lange's Blanche as she teetered on to the Haymarket stage last night and, her hands fluttering at her neck, her cheek and her forehead, proceeded to give a performance that combined vulnerability with a delicacy and intelligence not normally associated with moths.

Blanche is the most memorable member of the collection of dramatic characters Williams once called "my little company of the faded and frightened and difficult and odd and lonely". Like many of his people, she is in flight from reality and, like others, she is nostalgic for a South that, as Williams also said, "had grace, elegance and an inbred culture and was not a society based on money". But Belle Rêve, as her family mansion was almost inevitably called, has been mortgaged and drunk away. Now she has nowhere to take all her memories and dreams, fantasies and lies, but to her sister and brother-in-law's shabby apartment in the wrought-iron quarter of New Orleans.

With Toby Stephens's Stanley Kowalski sweatily embodying everything Belle Rêve isn't, you never for a moment doubt that her visit will end in disaster. Peter Hall's production, although it fails sufficiently to acknowledge the heat of a Louisiana summer, sustains the proper tension and, when the climaxes come, achieves the necessary intensity.

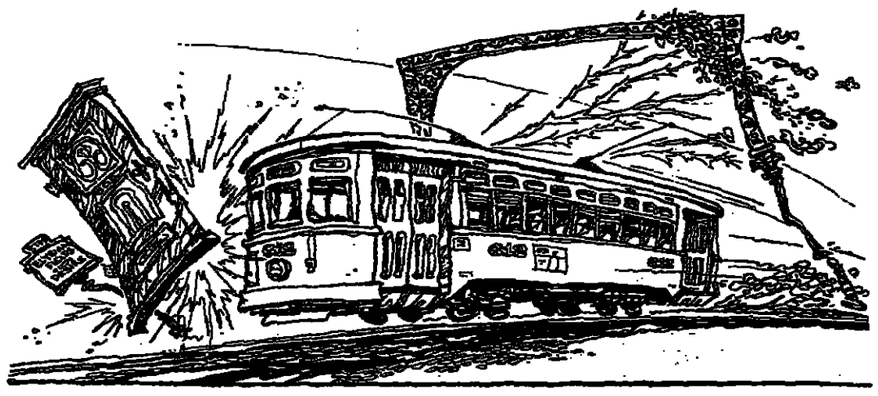
But a second and even more interesting conflict is to be found within the war between faded gentility and urban brashness. That is Blanche's battle with her own repressed yet irrepressible sexuality. Elia Kazan, the play's first director, went so far as to say that she was Williams's surreptitious portrait of himself: "An ambivalent figure attracted to the harshness and vulgarity around him at the same time that he fears it, because it threatens his life."

That was certainly true of Williams, a promiscuous homosexual who hated his own weakness for rough trade. It is less true of Lange, for all her flirtatious undulatings and her Mississippi coyness. You never quite see the erotic need and craving beneath the precosity. But why pick an argument with acting that in most ways seems so right? Lange shows you the pinched, stricken face behind the brittle, glittering smiles and the pain and the panic beneath the ethereal charm. Add desperate bursts of anger, a sense of irony and even the odd hint that in a better world Blanche might have been a nice, natural woman, and you have as complete a performance as anyone should expect.

Meanwhile, Imogen Stubbs brings plenty of warmth and energy to the not-so-rewarding part of Blanche's sister Stella, and Stephens reinforces his growing reputation with a Stanley who does much more than merely loll and slouch. He flashes insolent smiles and triumphant grins, he dangerously smoulders and violently explodes, yet keeps you mindful of the fact that it is his house that is being invaded, his hospitality abused, his person patronised and insulted. You can see why Blanche hates him. You can also see why Stella cleaves to him. It is a performance that would not have disgraced the actor who created the role, Marlon Brando himself.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

● *This review appeared in late editions of* The Times *yesterday*



"A performance that would not have disgraced Brando himself": Toby Stephens as Stanley Kowalski and Jessica Lange — "vulnerability combined with delicacy and intelligence" — as Blanche DuBois

Five in search of a laugh

Yule Better Change
New End, NW3

IN THE annual game of Musical Scrooges two colleagues carried off the Anthony Newley and Richard Briers versions, leaving me with Michael McArdle's. I cannot honestly say that his title (for he wrote, directs and plays the central role) led me to hope for a great deal from his enterprise. The prospect became bleaker on discovering that a coach party of 50 had postponed their booking, reducing the audience to five, equal to the size of the cast.

We scattered few did our best to impart some jollity to our responses, partly out of respect for the cast's courage but mainly to cheer ourselves up on a chilly evening fitfully warmed by the show's ersatz mirth. Possibly, though I would not be willing to take bets, a full house would make it all go with a zing.

The press release calls what McArdle has concocted a Magical Musical Comedy but the only magic occurred during the interval, when from out of the ether two humans materialised and increased the audience to seven. Where could they have come from? I suspect one of them was Marilyn Monroe, or rather, the actress who played her in the first half and never reappeared, representing as Monroe does the Spirit of Christmas Past.

You will have guessed that this is no ordinary *Christmas Carol*. It has songs, also by McArdle, that allude to the work of others, mostly dead others: for instance, in one of the show's better jokes, Scrooge is visited by Bob Marley's Ghost — Joanna Robinson under a top-heavy Rasta bonnet and curtain of dreadlocks.

Mason Laird makes a decent stab at Buddy Holly, groping his way blindly along the scenery, but he introduces a wretchedly written Cratchit scene, where Tiny Tim is played by a cardboard skeleton. Finally some familiar drumbeats bring us to *Also Sprach Elvis Presley* and the uplifting message of "You gotta live, you gotta love".

Production values are frugally distributed, and there is little evidence of a feeling for character. The rock stars who try to melt Scrooge's flinty heart manage to make him jig along to their beat but, since what finally changes him is the sight of his own gravestone, they could have saved themselves most of their trouble.

I suppose the Fezziwig dance at the Bar Humbug is another goodish joke, which makes two in all. Dickens's book is a fable of great power: people cheapen, eviscerate or prettify it and cannot be stopped but their efforts should not be encouraged. This is rough and laboured theatre.

JEREMY KINGSTON

Winning team but a no-score draw

FLANDERS OPERA: **Barry Millington** brings the news from Antwerp and Ghent

FLANDERS Opera, which services two delightful houses in Ghent and Antwerp, has just commissioned its first opera. The subject is promising — Laclos's **Les liaisons dangereuses** — and the story has been skilfully transferred from epistolary novel to lyric drama. Yet a question mark remains over the choice of composer: the Belgian Piet Swerts.

The process of recreating this classic of amatory intrigue on the stage was a protracted one in which three people, in addition to the composer, participated (more or less harmoniously): librettist Dirk Van der Cruysse, conductor Patrick Davin and director Philippe Sireuil. Letter-writing, sensibly, features little, being replaced by flesh-and-blood encounters informed by dialogue that is of necessity a drastic reduction of the original. And even if Jorge Jara's stunning array of period costumes occasionally confuses the picture, Sireuil's straightforwardly representational production for the most part clarifies the action. There are few moments of real theatrical inspiration, though Sireuil's lighting creates resonant stage pictures.

The real problem lies with Swerts's score. The 36-year-old Belgian has always been something of a stylistic magpie. Debussy is an avowed model in *Liaisons*, but the orchestral textures lack the translucence and subtlety of the French master's, and the harmonic idiom, incredibly, is rather less progressive. Swerts's opera could have been written 100 years ago and even then would have sounded old-fashioned.

François Le Roux should have created the role of the Vicomte de Valmont in Ghent, but a throat infection forced him to mime the role while Olivier Lallouette did a very creditable job from the side of the stage. Marilyn Schmiege (the Marquise de Merteuil) was a formidable co-conspirator and Lyne Fortin their chief victim, Madame de Tourvel. The orchestral contribution, under Davin, was excellent.

Also alternating between Ghent and Antwerp is a brilliant production by Stephen Lawless of a 17th-century double bill: John Blow's **Venus and Adonis** and Purcell's **Dido and Aeneas**. The Blow is generally agreed to suffer by comparison, but when the two are woven together as seamlessly as in Lawless's production there is much to be said for seeing them in tandem.

Benoit Dugardyn's designs place both operas in a neo-Restoration interior with shuttered windows looking out on to, variously, a starry night, an Arcadian landscape or a Trojan fleet. Semi-clad shepherds and shepherdesses (the superb Maria Cristina Kiehr among them) cavort erotically, and school-uniformed little Cupids give the action a contemporary slant.

Visual stimuli and expressive choreography (Andrew George) complement the inspired musical direction of René Jacobs. Outstanding among the principals was Daniel Mobbs as Adonis, but Janice Hall's Venus, Susan Maclean's Dido and Ned Barth's Aeneas were hardly less impressive.

THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL OFFERS

THE TIMES THE THEATRE CLUB

LONDON
Royal Opera House
Jan 1, 4
● THE conductor John Eliot Gardiner returns to Covent Garden for the Royal Opera's production of Massenet's sentimental comedy, *Chérubin*. The opera tells of the amorous adventures of young Chérubin, a pageboy who finds every woman he meets attractive, in spite of the reforming efforts of the Philosopher, the man in charge of his moral education, and Nina, who selflessly adores him. Will they finally win Chérubin over? Susan Graham sings the title role, with Elizabeth Futral and Alison Hagley. Theatre Club members can buy orchestra stall seats for £49 (normally £90 to £95). Tel 0171-304 4000

GLASGOW
Citizens Theatre
Jan 6, 18 (7pm); 7, 13 (2pm); 11 (8pm)
● BUY one adult ticket and get a child's ticket free (normally £2.50 to £5) for *The Wizard of Oz*. Tel 0141-429 0022

HULL
New Theatre
Jan 21
● TWO tickets for the price of one (normally £6.50 to £9.50) for Willy Russell's comedy, *Educating Rita*. Tel 01482 226655

BUXTON
Opera House
Jan 9, 16, 23
● TICKETS half price (normally £7 to £10) for the Winter Repertory Season, which includes a tantalising thriller (*The Business of Murder*), a gripping costume drama (*Tudor Virgin*) and a classic comedy (*She Stoops to Conquer*). Tel 01298 72190

NORWICH
Playhouse
Jan 23-Feb 8
● SAVE £1 on tickets (normally £10.50 to £12.50) for John Godber's award-winning comedy, *Up 'n' Under*. Tel 01603 766466

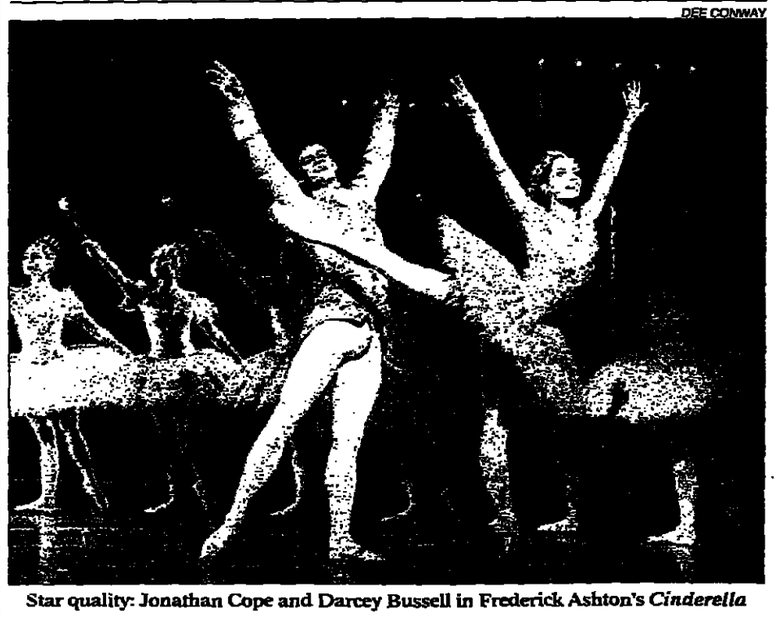
Bromley
Churchill Theatre
Jan 31, 6pm
● TWO £10 tickets for the price of one for Dein Perry's vibrant and energetic *Tap Dogs*. Tel 0181-460 6677

BRIGHTON
Komedia
Jan 15-18
● SAVE £1 on tickets (normally £5 to £7.50) for Michael Mears' *Tomorrow we do the Sky*. Tel 01273 277772

CARDIFF
New Theatre
Jan 28-29
● TICKETS £7 (normally £12 to £14) for *The Three Musketeers*, starring Christopher Biggins. Tel 01222 8788889

TO JOIN the Theatre Club either send a cheque for £12.50, made payable to The Theatre Club, together with your name, address and telephone number to The Theatre Club, P.O. Box 2164, Colchester CO2 8JL, or telephone 01206 225145 using your credit card. Please allow 28 days for delivery of your membership pack. For general inquiries call 0171-387 9673

DEE CONWAY



Star quality: Jonathan Cope and Darcey Bussell in Frederick Ashton's *Cinderella*

New girl at the ball

DANCE

Cinderella
Covent Garden

BELINDA Hatley has been with the Royal Ballet for eight years, but as a first soloist she is still finding her feet in principal roles. The latest to come her way is Ashton's Cinderella, a sweet-tempered heroine well-suited to Hatley's agreeable stage persona.

Her Cinderella is a demure creature, tenderly affectionate towards her ineffectual father and wistfully remembering her dead mother. She may be ill-treated by her wicked stepsisters, but she has the grace to forgive them. Her salvation is the escape into fantasy, a journey into the imagination which Hatley makes most persuasively.

The ball scene includes some gruelling choreography, a hurdle that gave Hatley pause for thought, especially when confronted by the marathon of turns that Ashton demands of his ballerina. But she has strong, quick feet (which one needs for Ashton), a pleasing softness to her line, and a musical sensitivity that floats over Prokofiev's rich melodies like icing on a cake.

A last-minute cast change meant Hatley was partnered by her real-life husband Michael Nunn. They rarely dance together on stage, although he makes a sympathetic and compatible Prince to her Cinderella.

The night before, *Cinderella* featured two of the established names of the Royal Ballet: Darcey Bussell and Jonathan Cope. Bussell's reading is surprisingly buoyant; a life of drudgery in the family kitchen doesn't seem to dampen her spirited determination to dream of better things. Her dancing was sunny and paced with a teasing musicality.

Cope, for his part, exuded true star quality. His first entrance as the Prince was a winning display of regal self-possession and romantic poise. Cope's splendid physique is the envy of many a dancer; now, it would appear, he is adding his own charismatic glamour to nature's wonderful gift.

DEBRA CRAINE

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament

EMILY MCKENZIE

Age: 22.

Profession: Actress.

Currently playing: Her first professional job is playing Sara Crewe, the lead in the Christmas production of *A Little Princess* at the Library Theatre in Manchester, adapted from Frances Hodgson Burnett's book. "Doing both a matinee and an afternoon show leaves me really knackered," she says. Before that, she was working as a waitress in Selfridge's, which was presumably even more tiring.

What do the cast think of her? "Most of them are a lot more experienced than me, so I have learnt a lot. I did feel a bit out of my depth at first, but they have been really encouraging. I was impressed to find that Ronnie Barker's daughter is in the cast. Like her Dad, she's got great timing."

Other than Selfridge's, where did she train? After getting four A levels at West Kirby Grammar School for Girls, including a B in Theatre Studies (and an E in English), she studied theatre and media drama at the University of Glamorgan and the Welsh College of Music and Drama, which she left last year. In May 1995, McKenzie won an acting commendation at the National Student Drama Festival in a production of a play called *Let's Play A Game Sorry*.

What else has she done? Give her a chance — she's only 22. She has starred in a short film made by a fellow student.

What? Surely she has been in *The Bill*? She hasn't been approached. Yet.

How about *Casualty* then? Please. That's enough.

What does she want to do? "It's great to have any work, but I'd love to do a mixture of theatre, TV and film. I'm one of the lucky ones so far."

What do her parents think of her success? "I had always wanted to be an actress, although initially they took a lot of talking round — neither of them have theatrical backgrounds — but they certainly get excited when they come and see me."

GUY WALTERS

■ LANDMARK

Amid the tacky charm of a cheap Florida resort resides the home of America's voyage into outer space

■ CHOICE 1

John Eliot Gardiner conducts *Cherubin* at Covent Garden

VENUE: Tonight at the Royal Opera House

THE TIMES ARTS

■ CHOICE 2

Ronnie Corbett stars in *Mother Goose*, Bromley's Christmas panto

VENUE: Today at the Churchill Theatre

■ CHOICE 3

In Cardiff, Mark Wigglesworth conducts a New Year's Day concert

VENUE: Tonight at St David's Hall

Rundown home of the right stuff

If These Walls Could Speak: Nigel Hawkes on the alligators, mosquitoes and towering achievements witnessed at Cape Canaveral

Cape Canaveral is in Florida but not, as Tom Wolfe recorded in *The Right Stuff*, any part of Florida you would write home about. When earmarked as a missile testing range in 1947, it was a strip of marsh and sandy scrub 34 miles long and five to ten miles wide, lying roughly between nowhere and the sea. Its most active residents were mosquitoes, rising in black clouds from the alligator-infested swamps.

What the Cape did have was geography. Far enough south to take some advantage from the Earth's rotational velocity to get satellites into orbit, and with plenty of Atlantic to swallow up misfires, it offered the rocket men a perfect playground. Wernher von Braun and his German confreres had already launched more than 60 V-2s at White Sands, New Mexico, but the desert wasn't big enough for them. In May 1947 a rocket went the wrong way and landed amid the graves in a Mexican cemetery south of Juarez — a clear hint to move on.

The sense of place is less intense in America than it is in Europe, no doubt because there is so much more place to sense, and because the human footprint on most of it is so impermanent. But, by the same token, time in America moves faster, so that by 1974 — less than 25 years after its first launch — the Cape was declared a national historical site. And quite right, too: it is a place steeped in our all-too-recent yesterdays.

In 1981 I spent an uncomfortable night at the Cape, wrapped in a blanket in the back of a hired Ford. The day before had been fixed for the first launch of the space shuttle, and I had set out at dawn from an Orlando motel for the easy 40-mile drive down US A1A for the launch. Me and several million others: with less than ten minutes of the countdown to go, I was stuck in a jam some distance from the site.

Then providence, in the form of a faulty computer, stepped in. The launch was called off and rescheduled for two days later. Rather than risk a repeat of my humiliation, I spent the night before the launch in the car and watched, stiff-limbed, as *Columbia* finally made a perfect arc against a blue sky. A glass of champagne would have been welcome at this point, but the Cape in those days was an austere sort of place for the visiting press. You watched the launch from plain wooden stands or from a stretch of sparsely covered open ground in front, running down to a creek where alligators ostentatiously turned their backs on all the fuss.

The Cape marries the austerity of an army base to the impermanence of a cheap resort. The nearest town is Cocoa Beach, "so Low Rent that nothing on this earth could ever change it", according to Wolfe.

> ‘The makeshift cannot help shining through’

Canaveral was originally named by early Spanish sailors for its abundance of cane reeds, the only remarkable quality it possessed. After President Kennedy's assassination, there was a half-baked bid to rename the Cape after him, but it never caught on, and I can't say I'm sorry. There are enough Kennedy memorials already without renaming a chunk of land which already possesses such a resonant title.

The first launch at the Cape, in July 1950, was of a rocket oddly named *Bumper 7*, a design close enough to the V-2 to be readily recognisable to the slave labourers who built von Braun's rockets in the last years of the war. A layer of concrete 100ft wide was laid directly on the sandy soil, while steel scaffolding borrowed from local painters provided the gantry. An old shack, once used as a changing room for swimmers brave enough to ignore the fire ants, was surrounded by sandbags and turned into a launch control blockhouse.

As 100 journalists watched from the beach, *Bumper 7* proved a total fizzle. Salt air had corroded its delicate innards, and it never rose above its pad. Nor was this the last of the Cape's disasters, because, as befits a historical site, it has seen failures along with its triumphs. Here the humiliation of *Sputnik*'s success was compounded by the failure of a Vanguard rocket to reach even the nearby Banana River, never mind orbit; here, too, three astronauts died in a fire when testing the Apollo spacecraft; and here the seven-strong crew of the shuttle *Challenger* perished in 1986, in full view of a shocked nation.

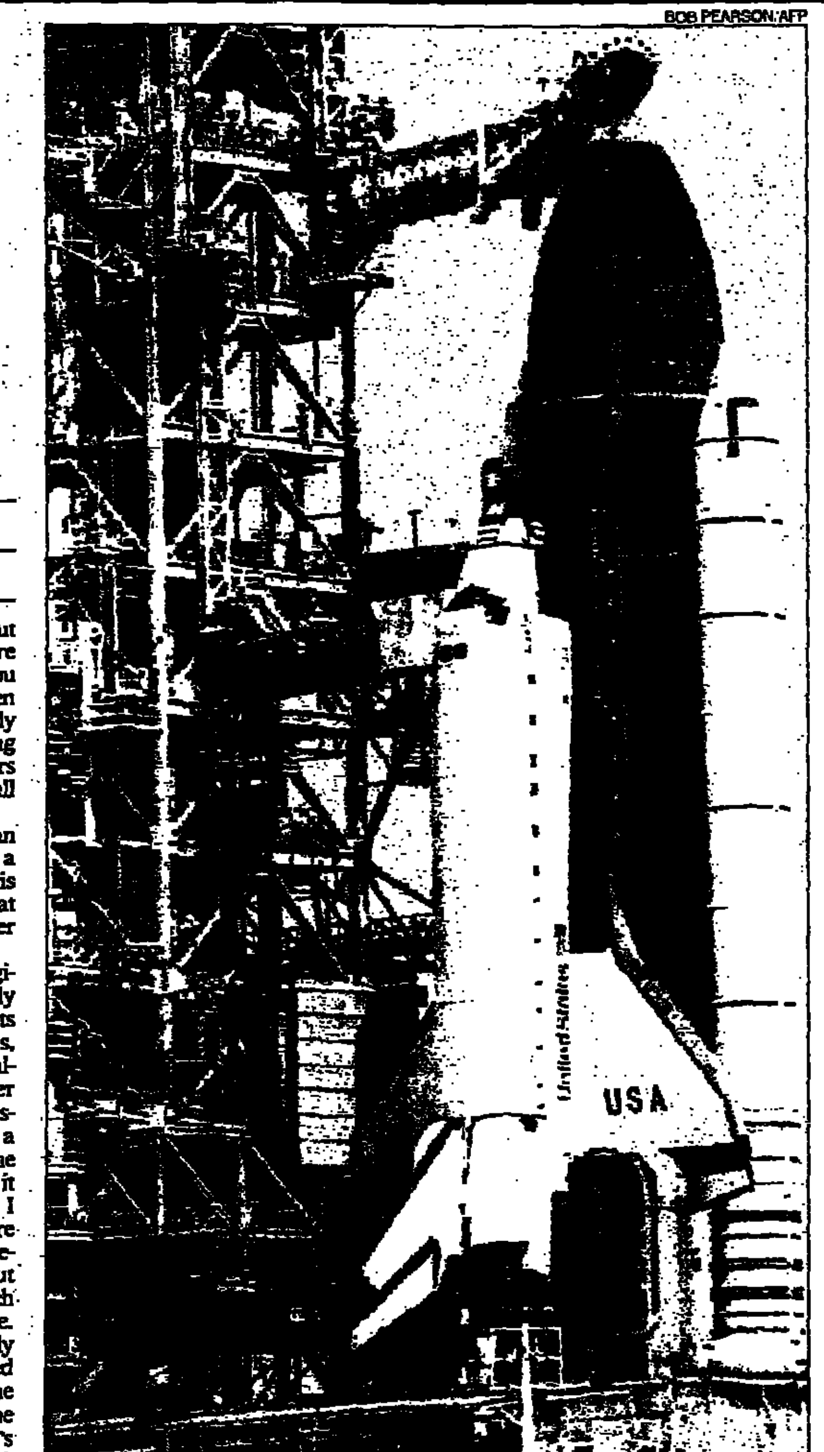
You might expect that recent launches would have obliterated all evidence of the earlier ones, but that is not the American way. Rather than reconstruct a pad, it is easier to build another a little distance away, so much of the history of the Cape is laid out in rusting gantries and long-abandoned blockhouses. From the slit windows of one of them I remember squinting across a hundred yards or so to the pad where a Redstone rocket lifted Alan Shepard in the first American manned space flight. Shepard had to wait so long on that pad that he was forced to pee inside his space suit, a contingency never anticipated by Nasa.

By the time of the Apollo missions' Saturn V launches — the greatest noise ever created by man, bar none — things were bigger, and a bit more sophisticated. They needed to be: launching a Saturn V was the equivalent of hurling a full-size naval destroyer ten miles in the air without breaking a thing on board.

Today the Cape is definitely tourist country, with the mosquitoes conquered and a visitor centre that welcomes more than three million people every year. When I last saw it — and I mean no offence by this — Cocoa Beach retained its tacky charm, and the seafood restaurant at Port Canaveral served fish straight from the deep-freeze while fishing boats sailed past the diners with fresh catches that would never see the plate until they had been frozen in their turn.

Space travel, critics have charged, lacks human qualities, and there is something in the complaint. Certainly the sanitised version of events put about by Nasa publicists is long on firm-jawed heroes and short on the very frailties that would make us believe them heroic. Visiting the Cape helps to set this right, for the makeshift cannot help shining through. When next in Florida, spare a day from the world made by Disney, and visit a real one: a world where history was made.

BOB PEARSON/AFP



A space shuttle is readied for blastoff at Cape Canaveral, the former Florida wasteland where mankind's biggest leaps are now almost commonplace

FAMILY EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian Maxey

LONDON

THE HOTCHPOTCH PANTOMIME **Chalemie** performs an 18th-century pantomime, replete with singing, dancing, mime, grotesques and supernatural effects. With Barbara Segal and Frank Petersen, dancers; Matthew Spring, hurdy-gurdy/theorbo; Jean-Pierre Rasle, musette/bagpipes/recorders; Frances Turner, violin; and Brian Clapton [illegible] percussion. Directed by Sara Stowe, who also plays harpsichord and sings soprano. Part of the Dance in Drama Festival
Purcell Room South Bank, SE1 (0171-960 4242). Tonight, 7.30pm

CHERUBIN The **Royal Opera** adds a romantic sparkle to the first day of the new year with a revival of Tim Albery's 1994 production of Massenet's sentimental comedy. Susan Graham reprises the role of the amorous young pageboy, Chérubin, after Mozart's Le nozze di Figaro. With Alison Hagley and Elizabeth Futral making their Covent Garden debuts as Nina and L'Ensoleillad. Conducted by John Eliot Gardiner, with designs by Antony McDonald. Sung in French with English surtitles
Royal Opera House Covent Garden WC2 (0171-304 4000). Tonight, 7.30pm. Then on Jan 7, 10 and 14 ◪

MOTHER GOOSE Ronnie Corbett stars in the Churchill's Christmas pantomime. With Donald Hewlett, the Patton Brothers and Zoe Hall
Churchill High Street, Bromley (0181-460 6677). Today, 2.30pm and 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, 2.30pm and 7.30pm, Sun 11am and 3.30pm. Until Jan 19

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM John Bradbury directs this year's **Johann Strauss Gala**. The Johann Strauss Orchestra performs music by the Strauss family, in a concert recreating the elegance and style of the 19th-century Viennese ballrooms. With the Johann Strauss Dancers dressed in costumes of the period
Symphony Hall Broad Street (0121-212 3333). Today, 2pm and 7.30pm ◪

BURY ST EDMUNDS Theatre Royal, Bury St Edmunds, in association with the Palace Theatre, Watford, presents the traditional family pantomime of **Cinderella**. Written by Roy Hudd and directed by Clive Duncan
Theatre Royal Westgate Street (01284 769505). Today, 2pm and 7pm. Jan 2-4, 2pm and 7pm. Jan 8, 7pm. Jan 9-11, 2pm and 7pm

CARDIFF Su Pollard plays the title role in a giant among pantomimes: **Jack and the Beanstalk**. With Mike Doyle, BBC Radio 2's Don Maclean, David Griffin, Gladiator Scorpio, and Zippy, George and Bungle from the children's television show, Rainbow
New Park Place (01222 878889). Today, 2.30pm and 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 2.30pm and 7pm. Until January 25 ◪

Also in **Cardiff** Mark Wigglesworth conducts the **National Orchestra of Wales** in a traditional New Year's Day concert. Tchaikovsky's Fantasy Overture from Romeo and Juliet is followed by the composer's Violin Concerto (soloist [illegible]). Once again, favourite waltzes and polkas by the Strauss family complete the programme
St David's Hall The Hayes (01222 878444). Tonight, 7.30pm

LONDON GALLERIES

Barbican [illegible] Experience (0171-638 4141); **Design Museum** Doing a Dyson: Conran Foundation Collection; The Good Buy Girl (0171-378 6055); **Festival Hall** The Scenic Eye: Visual Art and the Theatre (0171-960 4242); **National Theatre** Dazzle (0171-928 2252); **Royal Academy** From Mantegna to Picasso (0171-439 7438); **Serpentine** Bill Culbert (Gallery Lawn) (0171-402 6075); **Tate** The 1996 Turner Prize Exhibition; The 1996 Turner Prize Exhibition; Grand Tour: The Lure of Italy in the 18th Century (0171-887 8000); **V & A** American Photography, 1890-1965 (0171-938 8349/8441)

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

■ House full, returns only
◪ Some seats available
☐ Seats at all prices

■ **ART** Albert Finney, Tom Courtenay and Ken Stott in an exceptionally interesting drama about friendship, unspoken resentment and an almost all-white canvas. Matthew Warchus directs.
Wyndham's Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (0171-369 1736). Tue-Sat, 8pm; mats Wed, 3pm, Sat and Sun, 5pm

☐ **DICK DAREDEVIL** Action hero of 1940s radio comes to life in the London of doodle-bugs and jitterbugs. Musical fantasy, from Roy Wilmott's [illegible], set in wartime Fitzrovia.
Drill Hall Chenies Street, WC1 (0171-637 8270). Tue-Sun, 7.30pm. Until January 18

☐ **A DOLL'S HOUSE** No superlatives high enough for Janet McTeer in Anthony Page's first-class production of Ibsen's proto-feminist drama.
Playhouse Northumberland Ave, WC2 (0171-839 4401). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm

■ **THE ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT** Commissioned play from comedian David Schneider in which he plays a single man nerving himself to tell his mother (Sheila Steafel) he fancies a girl who isn't nice and Jewish. Matthew Lloyd directs.
Hampstead, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3 (0171-722 9301). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Sat, 3.30pm. Until January 18

■ **GUYS AND DOLLS** Richard Eyre revives his production of the Frank Loesser musical. Imelda Staunton recreates her role of Miss Adelaide. Starring roles for Harry Goodman, Clarke Peters and Joanna Riding.
National (Olivier), South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 2252). Mon-Sat, 7.15pm; mats Tue, Wed, Thurs, 2pm, Sat 2pm

◪ **THE HERBAL BED** Peter Whelan's thrilling exploration around a true incident in the life of Shakespeare's daughter. Moral attitudes questioned, love tested. Michael Attenborough directs a splendid cast.
Pit, Barbican Centre, EC2 (0171-638 8891). Tonight and tomorrow, 7.15pm; mat Thurs, 2pm. In rep

☐ **THE OFFICIAL TRIBUTE TO THE BLUES BROTHERS** Another West End showing for the cult songfest by guys in black glasses. David Leland directs.
Apollo, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (0171-494 5070). Mon-Thurs, 8pm; Fri and Sat 6pm and 9pm

☐ **PLUNDER** Griff Rhys Jones and Kevin McNally in merry though terribly snobbish Ben Travers farce. With Kevin McNally and Sara Crowe
Savoy Strand, WC2 (0171-836 8888). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mats Thurs and Sat, 2.30pm

◪ **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFE** Subtitled "The Songs of Leiber and Stoller", the Broadway compilation show celebrating a successful songwriting team responsible for Hound Dog, Jailhouse Rock and Spanish Harlem.
Prince of Wales, Coventry Street, W1 (0171-839 5987). Mon-Sat, 8pm; mats Thurs and Sat, 3pm

◪ **WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?** Diana Rigg and David Suchet in Howard Davies's powerful America production of Albee's searing play.
Aldwych, Aldwych, WC2 (0171-416 6003). Mon-Sat, 7.15pm; mats Wed and Sat, 2.15pm. Until March 22

LONG RUNNERS

☐ **Blood Brothers** Phoenix (0171-369 1733) ☐ **Don't Dress for Dinner** Duchess (0171-494 5070) ☐ **Grease** Cambridge (0171-494 5080) ☐ **An Inspector Calls** Garrick (0171-494 5085) ◪ **Jolson** Victoria Palace (0171-834 1317) ☐ **Martin Guerre** Prince Edward (0171-447 5400) ☐ **Oliver!** Palladium (0171-494 5020) ◪ **Sunset Boulevard** Adelphi (0171-344 0055) ◪ **Tommy** Shaftesbury (0171-379 5399) ◪ **The Woman in Black** Fortune (0171-836 2238)

Ticket information supplied by Society of London Theatre

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol ◆) on release across the country

NEW RELEASES

◆ **DAYLIGHT** (12) Sylvester Stallone rescues a cross-section of humanity from a blazing New York tunnel. Amusing old-style disaster movie. Director, Rob Cohen.
ABCs: Baker Street (0171-935 9772) **Tottenham Court Road** (0171-636 6148) **Empire** (0990-888 990) **Odeon Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098) **UCI Whiteleys** ◪ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Trocadero** ◪ (0171-434 0031)

SURVIVING PICASSO (15) Anthony Hopkins as Picasso the womaniser: an interesting film, but an unsympathetic hero. Director, James Ivory.
Minema (0171-235 4225) **Odeon Swiss Cottage** (0171-586 3057) **Renoir** (0171-837 8402) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Screen on Baker Street** (0171-935 2772) **UCI Whiteleys** (0990-888 990) **Virgins: Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636) **Haymarket** (0171-839 1527) **Warner West End** (0171-437 4343)

THROUGH THE OLIVE TREES (U) Abbas Kiarostami's moving and lyrical film about incidents on an Iranian film set in countryside devastated by an earthquake.
Renoir (0171-837 8402)

CURRENT

◆ **THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO** (U) Pleasant new version of the classic tale, mixing humans (Martin Landau, Geneviève Bujold) and animatronics. Director, Steve Barron.
Watermans (0181-568 1176)

◆ **THE CRAFT** (15) High school misfits delve into witchcraft. Routine fare with bright moments. With Fairuza Balk, Robin Tunney; director, Andrew Fleming.
Virgin Trocadero ◪ (0171-434 0031) **Warner** (0171-437 4343)

◆ **JINGLE ALL THE WAY** (PG) Aggressively American Christmas comedy, with Arnold Schwarzenegger as a dad in search of a prized action toy.
Odeons: Kensington (01426 914666) **Mezzanine** ◪ (01426 915683) **Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098) **Plaza** ◪ (0990 888990) **UCI Whiteleys** ◪ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Trocadero** (0171-434 0031) **Warner** (0171-437 4343)

◆ **THE LONG KISS GOODNIGHT** (18) Preposterous hard-driven action movie, with Geena Davis as an amnesiac government assassin.
Gate ◪ (0171-727 4043) **Odeons: Kensington** (01426-914 666) **Swiss Cottage** (0171-586 3057) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636) **Trocadero** ◪ (0171-434 0031)

◆ **MATILDA** (PG) Roald Dahl's tale about a precocious girl (Mara Wilson) who triumphs over pesky adults. Danny DeVito co-stars and directs.
Odeons: Kensington (01426 914666) **Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **UCI Whiteleys** ◪ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Trocadero** ◪ (0171-434 0031) **Warner** (0171-437 4343)

◆ **101 DALMATIANS** (U) Glenn Close knocks spots off the dogs in the live-action edition of the cartoon classic. With Jeff Daniels and Joely Richardson.
Barbican ◪ (0171-638 8891) **Clapham Picture House** (0171-498 3323) **Odeons: Kensington** (01426 914666) **Leicester Square** (01426-915 683) **Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098) **Rio** (0171-254 6677) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **Screen/Baker Street** (0171-935 2772) **UCI Whiteleys** ◪ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636)

THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG (PG) Splendid revival of Jacques Demy's bitter-sweet musical of 1964, gorgeously restored in pastel colours. With Catherine Deneuve.
Barbican (0171-638 8891) **Curzon Mayfair** (0171-369 1720) **Richmond** (0181-332 0030) **Screen on the Hill** (0171-435 3366)

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Extra Mat Thur 2 Jan

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JAMES CALLIS in
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"A RIVETING NIGHT" Eve Std
Mon-Sat 7.30pm, Thurs mat 2.30pm, Sat mat 4pm
Running time 2hrs 15 mins
SEASON ENDS 11 JAN

HAYMARKET 930 8800 (no bkg fee) 344 4444/420 0000 (with bkg fee)
Mon-Sat 7.45pm Mats Thur & Sat 3pm
JESSICA LANGE
TOBY STEPHENS IMOGEN STUBBS
in TENNESSEE WILLIAMS'
A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE
directed by PETER HALL
N.B. Evening perf time now 7.45pm

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CATS
Eves 7.45 Mats Tue & Sat 3.00
LATECOMERS NOT ADMITTED WHILE AUDITORIUM IS IN MOTION, PLEASE BE PROMPT
Bars open at 6.45
LIMITED NO. OF SEATS AVAIL DAILY FROM BOX OFFICE

NATIONAL THEATRE BO 0171 928 2252 Grps 0171 620 0741; 24hr cc bkg fee 0171 420 0000
OLIVIER Ton't, Tomor 7.15 GUYS AND DOLLS Music and lyrics by Frank Loesser, Book by Jo Swerling & Abe Burrows
LYTTELTON Ton't 7.30 DEATH OF A SALESMAN Arthur Miller
COTTESLOE Ton't 7.30 FAIR LADIES AT A GAME OF POEM CARDS A new verse play by Peter Oswald based on an original work by Chikamatsu Monzaemon. Tomor 7.30 THE CRIPPLE OF INISHMAAN A new play by Martin McDonagh

OLD VIC 928 7616/312 8034
THE PETER HALL COMPANY
Simon Ward Carol Drinkwater
Deborah Grant Robert East
Barbara Murray Richard Todd
OSCAR WILDE'S MASTERPIECE
AN IDEAL HUSBAND
"GREAT & GLORIOUS" S. Tms
Mon-Sat 7.30 Mats Wed & Sat 3.00
Extra Mat Thur 2 Jan
LAST 4 WEEKS

PALACE THEATRE 0171-434 0909 cc 24hrs (bkg fee) 0171-344 4444 (bkg fee) Grps 0171 413 3311
THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR MUSICAL
LES MISERABLES
NOW IN ITS 11TH RECORD-BREAKING YEAR
Eves 7.30 Mats Thu & Sat 2.30
Latecomers not admitted until the interval
LIMITED NO. OF SEATS AVAIL DAILY FROM BOX OFFICE

PHOENIX BO CC 0171 369 1733 /344 4444 420 0000 (fee)
BEST MUSICAL
Olivier Drama Awards
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WILLY RUSSELL'S
BLOOD BROTHERS
"...Brings the audience to its feet, and roaring its approval" D Mail
10TH TRIUMPHANT YEAR
Eves 7.45 Mats Thurs 3 Sat 4

PICCADILLY 0171 369 1734/344 4444/0171 420 0000 (24hrs)
"See it now or regret it forever" IOS
ADVENTURES IN MOTION PICTURES PRESENTS
SWAN LAKE
"the best night out in London" Standard
"Magical, fantastic, wonderful... the stuff of dreams" D. Tel
Eves 7.30 Mats Thu & Sat 2.30
MUST CLOSE 1 FEB

PLAYHOUSE 0171 839 4401 cc 0171 420 0000 (bkg fee)
JANET McTEER OWEN TEALE
"A Great & Unmissable Event" S Tms
A DOLL'S HOUSE
by Henrik Ibsen
a version by Frank McGuinness
directed by Anthony Page
Mon-Sat 7.30 Mats Sat 2.30
MUST CLOSE 11 JAN

PRINCE OF WALES 0171 839 5987 First Call 420 0000 cc 344 4444 Grps 420 0200 freephone/0800 614903
"HOT FROM BROADWAY, AND I MEAN SMOKIN'. ENOUGH ENERGY TO ELECTRIFY A CITY." D. Mail
GRAMMY AWARD WINNING MUSICAL
SMOKEY JOE'S CAFE
THE SONGS OF LEIBER & STOLLER
Directed by Jerry Zaks
"AMERICAN GRAFFITI MEETS WEST SIDE STORY" E. Std
"FRESH & SEXY, TOUCHING & TRUE" D. Telegraph
Mon-Sat 8pm Thu & Sat Mats 3pm

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"A MUSICAL MASTERPIECE" Int. Her Trib
"REAL POWER & PASSION A BLOCKBUSTER" D. Tel
"A BIG MAGNIFICENT EPIC MUSICAL. A GREAT EVENING OUT" S. Times
MARTIN GUERRE
BOUBLIL & SCHONBERG'S NEW MUSICAL RETURNS WITH A VENGEANCE" Std
Mon-Sat 7.45 Mats Thur & Sat 3.00

QUEEN'S (bkg fee) 494 5040/344 4444 Grps 494 5454/436 5588
GENE WILDER
"Puts the Gene into genius" D Mail
in NEIL SIMON'S
LAUGHTER ON THE 23rd FLOOR
"Funniest night out in London" News Of The World
Eves 8pm, Wed 2.30pm, Sat 4pm

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
LONDON (0171 638 8891)
BARBICAN: MACBETH Ton't 7.15
THE PIT: THE HERBAL BED Ton't 7.15
STRATFORD (01789 295623) cc 0171 413 1452)
RST MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING Ton't 7.30
SWAN: HENRY VIII Ton't 7.30
TOP: EVERYMAN next perf 2 January

ROYAL COURT 0171 565 5000 cc 420 0100 (24hrs) Downstairs (Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane)
THE BEAUTY QUEEN OF LEENANE by Martin McDonagh.
Until 18 Jan Mon-Sat 7.30 Sat mat 3.30

SAVOY THEATRE 0171 836 8888 cc 420 0000/344 4444 (no bkg fees) Groups 0800 614 903
GRIFF RHYS JONES
KEVIN McNALLY
SARA CROWE
PLUNDER
Ben Travers' riotous farce
"One of the great Christmas treats" Sheridan Morley - ITV
Strictly Limited Season
Evgs 7.30 Mats Thurs & Sat 2.30
No perf New Year's Day

SHAFTESBURY 0171 379 5399 0171 413 3568 (24hr/no bkg fee) Groups 0171 413 3321
"Breathtaking" S Times
"Spectacular" F T
"Brilliant" Observer
TOMMY
PAUL KEATING as Tommy KIM WILDE as Mrs Walker
Mon-Thu 8pm Fri 5.30pm (all seats £15) & 8.30 pm Sat 3pm & 8.30pm
Xmas Perfs Ton't 8pm
LIMITED DAILY AVAILABILITY

SHAFTESBURY 0171 379 5399 0171 413 3568 (24hr/no bkg fee) Groups 0171 413 3321
"Breathtaking" S Times
"Spectacular" F T
"Brilliant" Observer
TOMMY
PAUL KEATING as Tommy KIM WILDE as Mrs Walker
Mon-Thu 8pm Fri 5.30pm (all seats £15) & 8.30 pm Sat 3pm & 8.30pm
LIMITED DAILY AVAILABILITY

ST MARTIN'S 0171 836 1443 Eves 8 Tue 2.45 Sat 5 & 8
AGATHA CHRISTIE'S
THE MOUSETRAP
45th YEAR

STRAND THEATRE Box Off & cc (no fee) 0171 930 8800 cc (bkg fee) 0171 344 4444/420 0000 Groups 0171 413 3321/0171 436 5588
"BUDDY"
The Buddy Holly Story
"BRILLIANT" Sun
"BUDDY"
"WONDERFUL STUFF" Sun Tel
"BUDDY"
Tues-Thurs 8.0 Fri 5.30 & 8.30 Sats 5.00 & 8.30 Sunday 4.00
ALL SEATS 1/2 PRICE FRI 5.30 PERF
Xmas perfs: No perf Jan 1
8th ELECTRIFYING YEAR

VAUDEVILLE 0171 836 9987 (no bkg fee) cc 420 0000/344 4444 (bkg fee)
ROALD DAHL'S
THE WITCHES
"MARVELLOUS" Eve Standard
Mon 7pm, Tues-Fri 2pm & 7pm
Sat 11am, 2pm & 7pm
SEASON ENDS JAN 4

VICTORIA PALACE BO & cc (no fee) 0171 834 1317 cc (bkg fee) 0171 344 4444/312 1992/420 0000
Groups 0171 312 1995 /0171 436 5588 (no fee)
WINNER 1996 OLIVIER AWARDS
BEST MUSICAL
"JOLSON"
WITH BRIAN CONLEY
"A RESOUNDING HIT"
Sunday Telegraph
Evgs Tues to Sat 7.30, Mats Wed & Sat 3.00 Extra special ½ price mat Thurs at 2.00 starring Allan Stewart
NOW BOOKING TO APRIL '97

WHITEHALL 369 1735 cc 344 4444
Evec 8 Wed 3 Sat 5.30/8.30
IT'S A BENEFIT FRAUD BELLY LAUGH!
CASH ON DELIVERY
By MICHAEL COONEY
Dir by RAY COONEY
"THIS SUPERB FARCE IS AN INSTANT CLASSIC" D Tel
LAST WEEK MUST END SAT

WYNDHAMS 369 1736/344 4444
BEST COMEDY
EVE STD AWARDS
"ART"
ALBERT FINNEY
TOM COURTENAY
KEN STOTT
A new play by Yasmina Reza
Trans by Christopher Hampton
"The perfect West End play" IoS
Eves 8, Mats Wed 3, Sat & Sun 5
Extra Xmas Perfs
Dec 24 3pm Dec 27 5pm

WYNDHAMS 369 1736/344 4444
BEST COMEDY
EVE STD AWARDS
"ART"
ALBERT FINNEY
TOM COURTENAY
KEN STOTT
A new play by Yasmina Reza
Trans by Christopher Hampton
"The perfect West End play" IoS
Eves 8, Mats Wed 3, Sat & Sun 5
Extra Matinee 1 Jan at 3pm

Alan Coren

Thanks to clashing with the birthday of Jesus, my column, along with the rest of The Times, *did not appear last Wednesday. Unfortunately, readers thus never saw the Grand Christmas Quiz I had compiled in order to help them through the Yuletide shenanigans. More unfortunately yet, the answers to that quiz had already gone to press for this Wednesday, so I am afraid you will just have to make of them what you can.*

CHRISTMAS QUIZ ANSWERS

1. 138 eggs and a herringbone overcoat. He died in Ghent, attended by most of the woodwind section and a tall ginger woman claiming to be a cousin of Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

2. The sum of the squares of the other three sides, which explains why it fell over. The man charged with stoking the boilers was never found.

3. 1-0 after extra time. The penalty was taken by Queen Victoria.

4. The so-called Cardboard Bastard Case. Both bishops were defrocked. The remains of the vole are now in the Natural History Museum.

5. *The Sisters Karamazov.* Dostoevsky put the manuscript in a left-luggage locker, but since he recorded the details in his diary only as: "It was on the — of —, in this year of grace 18—, that I deposited the envelope in the town of M—, at the coach station on the corner of D— street," he never succeeded in finding it again.

6. Norman Lamont is the odd one out. All the rest are badgers.

7. Minus 38F, at which point it assumed an extraordinary resemblance to Selena Scott. Sadly, the temperature was such that none of the photographs came out, but the full story was recounted in a jingle which reached Number 7 in the Lapp charts.

8. A kind of whisky, made from conkers.

9. Because neither of them was gay, but this was not discovered until the contest was over. As the result, the Golden Laryngoscope was not awarded again until after the Great War, when it was open to Flemish speakers for the first time.

10. It forms part of Virginia Bottomley.

11. It was a picture postcard which led him to believe that the grave of Prester John lay beneath Euston Station. He escaped the dynamite charge on a technicality, and a Private Member's Bill was subsequently rushed through Parliament clarifying the wording on all platform tickets.

12. "Dear God, the very horses seem asleep!" Wordsworth changed the line only after Coleridge threw a sheep at him.

13. Pippin the Incontinent. The duel was interrupted six times under the terms of the Caspian Convention, and upon the final resumption it was discovered that the bowstrings had become irreparably slack due to sleet. Seconds settled the dispute by throwing coins into a chamber pot.

14. Marlene Dietrich, because George Formby's turned out to be smaller.

15. A canteen of cutlery. The camel was found in a Cheltenham hotel, but no satisfactory explanation was ever furnished as to why Scotland Yard assumed that the snooker cue belonged to Sir Stanley Baldwin.

16. "Ich bin ein Frankfurter." He was thrown into the Rhine.

17. Neither is correct: (a) would result in all clocks having to be reset to take account of the shift from left to right, while (b) would mean that only a coalition government would be in a position to petition the Royal Assent.

18. $E=mc^3$. He hanged himself from Brooklyn Bridge.

19. False. Although all three did claim to be David Mellor, it was only the Rastafarian who escaped through the window, the bidet was already cracked, and the dog did not answer to the name of Desmond Wilcox.

20. Wallis Simpson. The ointment was instantly withdrawn from sale.

21. Yes, he did: Irving de Gaulle. He was in the gown business.

22. She trained moths.

23. They are the only birds to communicate by breaking wind.

Michael Gove argues that the law is wrong: the Cromwell Street story should not be made into a film

Cinema screens out the real horror of violence

Two years ago today in a Birmingham prison cell, Fred West took his own life. The Gloucester builder's final killing cheated his victims' families of justice and the nation of the satisfaction of a suitable catharsis. Now the slow, painful and imperfect process of healing for those who suffered in Gloucester — and beyond — has been crudely set back by an ugly conjunction of bureaucratic crassness and commercial insensitivity.

It is far more than the timing which is objectionable about the revelation of plans to make a film of the life and times of Fred West. The Official Solicitor may have a responsibility to look after the interests of the West children but it is hard to see how they are best advanced by negotiating to sell the film rights to their father's story. How the respected Portman Entertainment Group came to believe it could embark on a celluloid retelling of the events in Cromwell Street for profit must test even the most cynical.

Fred and Rosemary West were no ordinary murderers. Although Hollywood has done its worst to make the serial killer as cosily familiar a screen presence as the cowboy used to be, and despite the brutalising effect of ever-more explicit violence, the real horror of Cromwell Street had a capacity to shock, and stop the heart seldom equalled since the war. Only, perhaps, the calculating sadism of Ian Brady and Myra Hindley stands comparison. The Wests chose the innocent, the vulnerable, their own flesh and blood for sexual violence and torture. Afterwards, bodies were disposed of with all the ceremony of unwanted refuse.

To imagine that their story could be told on the big screen is to grotesquely misunderstand the nature of their crime. It is true that murders have often been the stuff of film entertainment, crimes of passion or standard domestics, killings that occurred during armed robberies or calculated individual assassinations. But, although each taking of human life is unique and horrible there is something uniquely horrible about the scale, manner and mentality of the Wests' crimes. Only organisations or individuals who had forgotten how to feel could think otherwise.

It might be argued that there was merit in a story which has the capacity to make us reflect on the nature of evil and its persistence in our world being told by a responsible and professional film company such as Portman. Their professionalism and commitment to the highest production values is apparently all too clear in their film versions of Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* and Beryl Bainbridge's *An Awfully Big Adventure*. But it is precisely because any film would be made by a respectable company committed to cinematic excellence that the enterprise is so dangerous.

Cinema is, at its best, a simultaneously seductive and pasteurising art form. In the hands of a skilled director, and Portman would not entrust its reputation to anyone else, violence inevitably loses the capacity to truly horrify. When we read about violence such as the Wests' in the dry and suitably censored court reports imagination provides the horror and moral sense the revulsion. More than that, the chance to reflect and contextualise which we have while reading is denied us by the narrative sweep of the film and the distorting focus of the lens.

No film could, conceivably, give a wider audience cause to reflect on the nature of evil and the carelessness with which society can forget those who slip through the safety net and into the wrong hands. Those with a mind to consider such matters will already have had their consciences engaged by the press reporting and works such as Andrew O'Hagan's impressive study of lost souls, *The Missing*. Any film would, sadly, and inevitably, attract only ghouls and controversy.

It would, however, from those sources alone, make money. And that is sadly the motivation, not just for Portman but also the Official Solicitor, Peter Harris. It was the Official Solicitor who made over Fred West's papers to the biographer Geoffrey Wansell for an "authorised" life of the killer. The justification was twofold. The first defence was that such a book would place on the record the doings, and thoughts, of West for posterity and as a warning. It might also displace in the market cruder accounts of the events in Cromwell Street.

The second justification was a duty of care enjoined on the Official Solicitor by the nature of his office. He is bound to look after the financial affairs of the surviving West children. Their interests were served by the publication of the book but would be considerably boosted by any film. Features at MGM, or even post-watershed hours on Carlton yield much larger sums than even the newsiest hardbacks in Waterstone's.

It would be wrong if the West children, in their own way victims of Cromwell Street, were to have their father's and mother's sins visited on them. They have suffered and should not be denied their due. But they have already received it.

The Wansell book, although few could ever find it diverting, will have given them an income which many would happily have denied them. Although its detail is repellent, the book is at least a sober medium and the style restrained. It cannot provide the gratuitous extra offence which a film, inevitably, would.

Whatever extra money the West children might enjoy from a film would be bought at the cost of continued, indeed intensified, pain for all those who still grieve. If the Official Solicitor persists in his intentions, he will be embarking on a course so hidebound by law and hard-hearted in effect as to test the satirical pen of a Dickens.

Censorship is a weapon which should only be used in war — and if anyone wishes, in the future, to make a film which charts the horrors of Cromwell Street, it would be wrong to use the law to stop them.

It is, however, insupportable that the law should be conspiring to see such a film made.

At long last, peace in our time

We should be celebrating a world without wars, whatever the prophets of doom say. Why curse our good fortune?

ROBERT CAPA/MAGNUM

During the Spanish Civil War, a fighter dies. "War and the threat of war have always been a kind of solution"

I shall start the year by chancing my arm. The world is more at peace today than ever before in living memory. In 1997 we contemplate a second year in which, for the first time since proverbial records began, nothing that could be called a state of hot war exists between sovereign countries. Guns are not firing across borders. Soldiers are not dying in their nation's cause. There are civil wars, drugs wars, gang wars and trade wars. But rip-roaring, sound-the-trumpet, bang-the-drum wars of national aggression seem to have gone out of fashion. Nobody has noticed.

The Stockholm Institute for Peace Research publishes a report each year on world conflicts. It has become a bible for arms salesmen, mercenaries, diplomats, United Nations staff and foreign reporters. The last yearbook mustered two dozen internal conflicts in such places as Afghanistan, Rwanda and Chechnya. The next update is likely to show a fall even in this category. (I believe the only artillery pieces currently being fired in anger are around Kabul.) There is plenty of international tension, as between China and Taiwan, India and Pakistan, and Iraq and its neighbours. The political meteorologist can find dark clouds over Bosnia, Zaire and Palestine. But this is hardly the stuff of apocalyptic copy.

Most years, statesmen and bishops queue up on Christmas Day to condemn conflicts and bloodshed and earnestly tell the world to behave better. This year, from the American President to the Pope, they were bereft of raw material. The Pope deplored "the clash of arms shattering the spell of peace brought by this holy day". But he gave no map reference and the phrase sounded like a papal stock-in-trade. In Britain the seasonal homilies of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal Hume were more than usually empty exercises in the "why oh why" school of journalism.

Desperate to find something to deplore, the prelates this year accused the world, in George Carey's words, of being "adrift from its moral, historical and institutional roots". Dr Carey was not specific on these roots nor on the direction of drift, but to the best of my knowledge he ignored world peace. Welcoming goodness is not episcopal practice: it wins no headlines. Bishops share a public syndrome diagnosed by opinion pollsters, that Britain is in a state of automatic moral decline from which no amount of evidence (let alone leadership) can possibly rescue it.

The 1995 British Social Attitudes survey showed every indicator pointing firmly to pessimism. The world was seen as more lawless, more violent and more devoid of hope with each passing year. An overwhelming preponderance of those surveyed believed that in the next ten years Britain would see street riots and political terrorism as "common events". The police would no longer be able to cope, criminality would be widespread and, for good measure, a nuclear bomb would explode somewhere in the world. This pessimism reigned even where, as in poverty, prosperity and education, there is every sign of steady improvement.

We cannot handle good news. I believe this inability is becoming as morally debilitating as the readiness to absorb bad news. It makes us think worse of our fellow citizens and of foreign countries. We become less inclined to defend individual liberty against the encroachment of state power, since we believe that state power is necessary to counter mounting anarchy. Believing the enemies of civil order to be perpetually at our gates, we cede ever more control to our rulers to fight them.

In his poem *Waiting for the Barbarians*, Constantine Cavafy portrayed a city awaiting attack. The citizens gather in the public square. They unite. The consuls don scarlet robes. Evening comes, but not the barbarians. Suddenly the citizens are told there will be no attack. Indeed, some reports deny the existence of barbarians at all. The people go home morose, saying: "Without the barbarians, what is to become of us? After all, they would have been a kind of solution."

War and the threat of war have always been a kind of solution. They make ruling easy, and make philosophy easy too.

Historians such as Marx and Spengler adopted a pessimistic view of history to validate authoritarian politics. Despite a proclaimed rightward shift over the past decade, anti-state ideology has been more apparent than real. Like Pavlov's dogs, democrats tend to salivate most in response to danger.

Simon Jenkins

Hegel and Hobbes have always had a better press than Tocqueville or Nozick. When more modern historians suggest that conflicts between states might be at an end, or that the collapse of the Soviet Union was a triumph for world peace, an avalanche of odium descends on them. Francis Fukuyama's declaration, that social democracy had not only won the argument but had possibly ended war, was excoriated as naive optimism.

When a rival historian, Paul Kennedy, replied (in *Preparing for the Twenty-first Century*) that the world faced catastrophe through overpopulation, pollution, mass migration and ozone depletion, he was lauded as a prophet. Equally exalted are pundits as diverse as Sam Huntington and *The Economist* when they predict world war between Muslim and Christian regions of the globe. Such views accord with the bad news that we read in the newspapers. Disaster must be at hand. There is no intellectual closed shop as pervasive or tight-knit as the pessimistic theory of history.

I recall the manager of an airline once complaining that his safety record was impeccable, yet nobody ever mentioned it in the media. A journalist replied that this was hardly surprising, since his planes persistently failed to crash. He was boring. Last year the world failed to crash and was thus declared boring. We honour war but have no way of honouring its absence. The world does not give itself a collective Nobel Peace Prize.

Time was when commentators were castigated as "soft on communism". Today they are damned for being soft on gloom. The pessimist has all the best tunes — and the richest friends. The think-tanks that pour out dire warnings about aggressive regimes usually have fat contracts with defence ministries. Two massive interest groups have an aversion to news of peace. One is the arms industry and its booming subsidiary in internal security. The other is supranational diplomacy and so-called non-government organisations. Both grow fat warning of apocalyptic military and ecological conflicts. Both see optimism as a threat to their status and prosperity.

Eisenhower's "military-industrial complex" long exaggerated Soviet armed might and aggressive intent. The same complex now promotes evidence of so-called international terrorism and presents every civil war as having a "out-of-area destabilising effect". Its power to order the New Interventionism on parade was evident in Somalia and Bosnia. It promotes spending on arms and spending on international organisations. It periodically sends a cruise missile into Iraq.

The nadir of the alliance between the military and diplomatic intervention came with last autumn's near miss in Zaire. Amid diplomatic hysteria, 3,000 British soldiers were almost sent into the Zairean jungle, with no military objective beyond spending gargantuan amounts of money and yielding politicians some pride.

The same lobby cheered the choice of Kofi Annan as Secretary-General of the United Nations. Wherever Mr Annan treads, the Pentagon is never far behind.

There is much misery in the world and always will be. The absence of international conflict may have led to a rise in civil and separatist wars. But if an occasional civil war is the price of world peace, it is a price I am ready to pay. The danger is not that such conflicts will spread, but that they will act as magnets to transient intervention from the UN or Nato countries under the cloak of humanitarian intervention. Witness the antics of the Americans in Beirut, the Germans in Croatia and the French in Zaire.

Of course, optimism has its risks. The perfect soldier is, as Tolstoy said, the most idle. He deters battle merely by existing. But this must not delude us that he is not needed. The world's democracies must stay on guard. Nor is there any danger of the defence lobby allowing this case to go unheard. Military spending is still huge.

What we find so hard is to acknowledge the current success of that spending. Peace seems invisible and therefore unaccountable. The West's response to Rwanda — the nearest we came to internationalising and exacerbating a civil war — saw a yearning for battle, an irrational, almost desperate desire to intervene. It was as if inaction was in danger of putting diplomats and generals, statesmen, bishops and journalists out of work.

Swords into ploughshares is boring. Ploughshares mean food mountains. Swords still mean glory.

Rod runner

PATIENCE is a virtue seldom seen in rock stars. Rod Stewart, it seems, was unable to sit through Monday night's premiere of *A Streetcar Named Desire* at the Haymarket Theatre. Admittedly, at three hours long, Tennessee Williams's play can be the theatrical equivalent of a musty, fat paperback. But with Jessica Lange on top form in her West End debut, Stewart's decision to bail out at half time was particularly feeble. Rude to boot, since he had approached the promoters of the play for tickets.

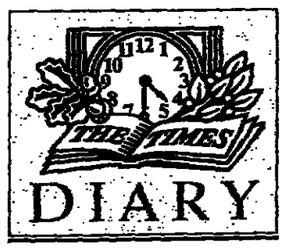
Even Mrs Stewart, the model Rachel Hunter, whose reputation rests more upon her physical attributes than her academic abilities, stayed the course. For once, Stewart could not attribute his early exit to excessive perspiration inside his usual leather trousers, as he had donned a pinstripe suit for the evening. It seems it was plain boredom, with hunger thrown in.

During the interval, the Stewarts and two friends holed up in the cloakroom by the stalls bar for a conference. Dinner was mooted by Stewart, only for the subject to be dismissed by his wife.

When the bell rang for the second half, Rod and his friend had decided. As the ushers encouraged everyone back in, Mrs Stewart returned to her seat while her husband told her: "If anyone asks, tell them I've got a dicky stomach." And with that he paused, checked the coast was clear and hopped it.

Theatre parting: the Stewarts

● *DESPITE undergoing surgery to remove a malignant tumor from his right lung last month, Czech President Václav Havel is still in need of encouragement to kick his lifelong smoking habit. To that end, Havel's aides have urged him to include a public pledge to quit in his traditional new year's broadcast.*



All a-quiver

A FRIEND suffering from heavy flu was visiting the Louvre over Christmas. Pausing in the 18th-century section to admire a portrait of Diderot, she was alarmed to discover that the grand old man of letters was also shivering violently as if he, too, was in the grip of a terrible ague.

Steadying herself on the arm of the nearest attendant, she pointed at the vibrating picture and asked if she was seeing things: "Oh non, madame," he reassured her. "Zat is zee air-conditioning, it has a leetle problem." The system is to be fixed in the new year, until which time the old masters will keep shuddering on their picture hooks.

● *Another Man of the Year title for the Prime Minister, this time from the Midlands. "Major won the title fair and square," said a staggered Ed Doolan, whose Sunday morning show on BBC Radio West Midlands featured the poll. A call of congratulation to Conservative Central Office: "We're delighted," they said, "especially as we knew nothing about it."*

Noble gas

FIRST in the queue for the title "Fat Head of 1997" is Joseph Sickert, 72, the self-styled HRH Prince Joseph, Duke of Clarence. Yesterday he cropped up at the funeral of Dame Elizabeth Hill, former Professor of Slavonic Studies at Cambridge University and escapee from the Russian Revolution, purporting to represent the Romanovs, the Russian Royal Family.

Using Dame Elizabeth's funeral as a pretext, he sent out a press release from his Camden home stressing his claim to the titles. No matter that the last Duke of Clarence, Queen Victoria's grandson, died childless in 1892.

"He had a daughter called Alice," said the ducal hopeful, "and she married my father, Walter." You mean Walter Sickert, the Camden impressionist who married three times, although never to a woman called Alice? "That's right. I can prove it," he says. As evidence, he offers a fax purportedly from "Grand Duke Michael Alexevich of Russia", addressed to "our right trusty and well-beloved cousin".

Soft cell

CRATER-FACE, aka General Manuel Noriega, the former Panamanian dictator, has been spending his time in prison writing his memoirs, to be called *America's Prisoner: The Memoirs of Manuel Noriega*. He has written about life in the Metropolitan Correctional Facility, Miami, for *At Random*, the in-house magazine of his publisher, Random House. Life, he says, is not so bad in chokey. Fellow prisoners call him "Manny" and he watches a lot of television. "I watch more TV than I would care to admit," he says. "Even considering the fact that it is largely a frivolous exercise, it does provide a window on American popular culture." Wildlife programmes and line-dancing shows are his favourites. Among the various magazines he receives in jail is a regular copy of *Men's Health*, an organ designed for men whose life revolves around their stomach muscles.

"I refuse to do Trafalgar Square next year"

Frankie's way

REVENGE at last for the twin curse of Demis Roussos and Nana Mouskouri, perpetrators of the *dolmades* sound which blighted Woolworth's record departments for so long. To bring in 1997, Greek television last night featured Frankie Dickens, the East End Frank Sinatra impersonator and second cousin of Dame Vera Lynn.

Dickens, pictured here poised for a doo-be-doo, made his name singing in Athenian nightclubs. American businessmen then took to him and paid hefty sums for him to appear at corporate events. "I'm the first British Sinatra since Matt Monro," he says. "But isn't it just typical that I have to go to Greece before making it at home?"

Big in Athens: Frankie Dickens

For the Greeks, Dickens performed his new song, *This side of Town*, as well as Sinatra standards. After listening to the new single, I recommend that Dickens should receive a lottery grant for more travel overseas. America still needs paying back for John Denver.

P·H·S

Shares edge higher in thin trading

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and *price/earnings* ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
538	414	Allied Domecq†	456½	+ 1	6.5	13.8
625	477	Bulmer (HP)	550	...	3.1	18.2
131	67½	Burn Stewart	98½	+ 1	6.1	73.9
889	615	Glenmorangie 'A'	870	...	1.8	23.7
498	411	Grand Met	459	+ 1	4.4	14.5
483	425	Guinness	457½	+ 2	4.2	14.2
378	315	Highland Distl	335	...	3.1	18.2
303	259½	Matthew Clark	262½	...	11.4	12.5
141	91½	Merydew Wf	106½	...	5.4	14.4
2612½	1375	SA Breweries	1493¾	...	2.1	...

BANKS

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
3969¾	2743½	ABN-AMRO	3750	- 37½	3.3	14.8
767½	528	Abbey Nat	765	+ 1½	3.8	14.1
420	315	Allied Irish	392½	...	4.6	11.3
399½	285	Aus New Z	368¾	...	5.1	...
6187½	3843½	Bank America	6068½	...	...	...
316	227½	Bank Scotland	306½	...	...	...
1041½	683	Barclays	1009½	+ ½	3.0	11.3
528½	413	Bk of Ireland	517½	...	3.5	10.9
482	360	Cater Allen†	381½	...	4.0	11.7
6453¾	4031½	Citicorp	6293½	...	0.8	15.1
392	307½	Close Bros	358	+ 22½	3.5	14.5
1575	1316½	Commerzbk	1316½	...	3.5	...
1350	869½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	869½	...	0.5	...
3412½	2728½	Deutsche Bk	2768½	+ 18½	2.5	...
806½	583½	Espirito Santo	788½	...	4.2	11.3
1507	850	Fuji Bank Y	850	...	0.5	...
472	260	Gerrard	271	...	10.6	11.0
267½	196	Hambros	224	...	4.2	18.0
1329	931	HSBC	1306	- 7½	3.6	12.4
1295½	930	HSBC 10p	1272	- 8	3.7	12.0
489½	385	Irish Perm	489½	+ 1	2.9	13.3
197	143	King Shaxson†	182½	...	6.2	20.4
465	405	Leopold Jt	465	...	5.5	27.5
436	294½	Lloyds TSB	430½	- ½	3.5	18.2
740½	566	Nat Aust Bk	688½	...	5.9	9.5
726½	605½	Nat West	685½	- 1½	4.8	9.4
87	48½	Rea Brothers	80	...	2.1	22.6
596	464	Ryl Bk Scott	563½	+ 2	4.1	12.5
1547½	1185	Schroders	1515	- 2½	1.4	17.2
1340	800	Schroders N/V	1337½	...	1.6	15.2
135	99½	Singer & Fried	128	...	4.2	9.4
729½	547	Stand Chard	719	- 7½	2.1	14.8
115½	85½	Ulster	94	...	4.0	10.1
£174½	£131½	Wells Fargo	£164½	...	1.9	...
382	264	Westpac	338½	...	3.9	11.1
360	268	Wintrust	312½	...	5.0	15.6

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

[illegible]

BUILDING & CONSTRUCT

[illegible]

BUILDING MATERIALS

[illegible]

CHEMICALS

[illegible]

DISTRIBUTORS

[illegible]

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

[illegible]

ELECTRICITY

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
161	89	Br Energy PPP	147	...	7.8	...
737	478	East Midlands	668½	...	5.9	11.1
873	563	London Elect	890½	- 2½	7.8	18.4
398	164½	National Grid	186½	+ 3	7.1	7.8
815	373½	National Power	488	+ 3½	8.0	8.3
724	484	Northern Elec	648½	+ 2	8.4	5.9
425	305	Nthn Ireland	381	+ 3	6.5	5.9
525	452	PowerGen	572½	...	4.9	6.7
372	271½	Hydro-Elec	328	+ 1	6.3	8.2
384	269½	Scottish Power	352	+ 5	6.8	10.3
819	607	Southern Elec	798	+ 5	6.9	9.2
910	550	Yorkshire Elec	808	+ 5	6.8	10.5

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

[illegible]

ENGINEERING

[illegible]

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p) +/-	Yld %	P/E
299	289	Stakis...	247½	4.8	...
...	...	[illegible]	...	...	...

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p) +/-	Yld %	P/E
151	108	Adwest	140	7.0	29.8
205	180	Airflow Stream†	188	5.3	8.1
758½	473	Avon Rubber†	724 + 1½	3.4	14.0
101	57½	BSG†	98½ + 1	4.1	15.3
353	230	Brotherm	237½ - 18	3.7	9.5
28	15	Carolate	16½	7.6	38.7
307	175	ERF	299	1.9	...
608	491	First Tech	677	1.6	19.9
1106	778	GKN	1001 + 1	3.1	17.3
3800	2958	General Mtr	3287½	2.9	...
669	487	Hawtin	537½	3.0	13.6
1832½	1312½	Honda Motor	1710½	0.4	...
542	306	Laird	338	3.6	12.1
480	405	Lookers	480	0.3	...
282	172	LucasVarity	227½ - 2	0.0	...
159½	81	Mayflower	151	1.7	42.9
193	145	Sykes	163½ - 1	4.5	12.0
198½	120½	T & N	173½ + 1	4.3	12.3
433	252½	Tomkins Hidget	279 + 1½	3.8	14.2

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

[illegible]

HEALTHCARE

[illegible]

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

[illegible]

INSURANCE

[illegible]

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

[illegible]

LEISURE & HOTELS

[illegible]

MEDIA

[illegible]

MINING

[illegible]

OIL & GAS

[illegible]

OTHER FINANCIAL

[illegible]

PHARMACEUTICALS

[illegible]

PRINTING & PAPER

[illegible]

PROPERTY

[illegible]

RETAILERS, FOOD

[illegible]

RETAILERS, GENERAL

[illegible]

SUPPORT SERVICES

[illegible]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
407	326½	BT†	394½	- 1	6.1	12.5
554	357	Cable Wireless†	485½	- 1½	2.7	17.8
167½	130	Euro Telecom†	167½	...	0.7	24.8
214½	155	General Cable	194	- ½	...	...
127	85½	NYNEX Cable	108½	- ½	...	...
254	166	Orange	188	+ 1	...	...
318	262	Securicor	279½	- ½	0.7	22.7
190	117½	TeleWest	124	...	...	...
265½	208½	Vodafone†	246½	- 1	2.2	22.4

TEXTILES & APPAREL

[illegible]

TRANSPORT

[illegible]

WATER

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
631	512	Anglian†	590	- 2½	6.6	7.1
785	650	Hyder†	743½	+ 7	6.8	10.2
109	36	Hyde Co Prf	102½	...	9.6	...
640	420	Mid Kent Hldgs	630	...	5.9	10.5
696	518	Severn Trent†	571	+ 1½	6.2	7.4
2875	2375	South Staffs	2875	...	5.6	14.3
731	489	South West	686½	...	6.1	6.7
515	326½	Thames†	612½	+ 2½	6.2	7.9
633	539	Utd Utilities†	621	+ 1½	6.9	11.3
378	295	Wessex†	376	+ 2½	5.3	7.5
731	580	Yorkshire†	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

[illegible]

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

[illegible]

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

[illegible]

LONGS (over 15 years)

[illegible]

UNDATED

[illegible]

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of: 10% 5%

[illegible]

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* Source: Micropal

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Source: FT Information

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THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
AB UNIT TRUST MANAGERS LTD				
01895 258 783				
Gnomad Acc	229.20	242.50	- 2.00	.
Gnomad Equity	292.30	310.50	+ 0.60	1.52
Gnomad Euro	355.60	380.90	- 0.60	0.59
Gnomad East Bal	134.80	138.70	- 2.80	2.57
Gnomad Emg Bd	76.65	79.10	+ 0.15	6.61
Gnomad Japan	140.00	148.10	- 1.20	.
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS				
01203 532 231				
General Acc	684.10	738.90	+ 0.90	2.39
General Inc	579.60	616.50	+ 0.80	2.33
UK Growth Acc	499.90	518.60	- 1.20	2.53
UK Growth Inc	310.60	330.90	+ 0.80	2.53
Higher Inc Acc	853.60	908.10	+ 1.70	3.90
Higher Inc Inc	454.60	483.70	+ 0.80	3.90
Gilt/Fixed Int Acc	313.80	325.70	- 0.10	5.43
Gilt/Fixed Int Inc	93.60	98.86	- 0.04	5.43
Gth America	356.80	379.80	- 1.70	.
Europe	367.70	390.60	+ 0.10	0.28
Brit Equity	96.15	102.30	+ 0.50	2.62
Brit Endmtnt Acc	127.50	129.70	+ 0.20	4.42
Brit Endmtnt Inc	81.26	86.45	+ 0.16	4.42
Gacial Dstr	98.23	104.50	- 0.50	.
Balanced Acc	64.43	68.55	- 0.01	2.49
Balanced Inc	60.16	64.01	- 0.01	2.49
Japan Acc	38.70	41.18	- 0.32	.
Pac Basin Acc	391.70	416.80	- 1.90	0.65
ABBEY UNIT TST MGRS				
0345 717 373				
Gilts & Fixed Int	132.60	140.80†	- 0.10	6.75
High Inc Equity	191.90	204.10	- 2.40	4.25
Worldwide Bond	267.70	283.90†	- 0.70	4.71
American Growth	387.20	413.60†	- 1.70	0.32
Asian Pacific	318.63	338.90	- 7.80	0.47
Assets & Earnings	379.20	398.70†	- 6.10	2.78
Euro Capital Acc	188.50	200.50	- 0.50	0.79
Extra Inc	40.14	45.99†	- 0.03	7.38
General	287.20	305.50	- 0.90	2.85
Global Opps	68.34	72.70	- 0.05	0.53
Japan	65.79	70.00	- 0.30	.
Managed Inc	48.38	51.47†	- 0.01	4.37
Mortgmnd	170.00	180.80	- 1.90	1.34
UK Emerging Cos	198.70	209.30	- 1.50	.
Ethical	84.25	89.63	- 0.49	1.97
International	132.20	141.70	- 0.40	0.51
Dividend & Growth	70.11	75.29	+ 0.07	4.45
Global Gwth & Sec	73.97	79.07	- 0.10	3.35
Latin America	65.11	69.27	+ 0.04	0.37
Capital Reserve	148.80	156.80	+ 0.10	4.77
ABERFORTH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0131 220 0733				
UK Small Cos	2358.00	2454.00	.	.
ABTRUST UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0800 833 388				
Accm Inc & Growth	59.95	62.71	- 0.39	0.16
Emerging Asia	70.16	73.03	- 1.05	0.05
European	150.60	156.80	+ 1.00	.
Everest	1096.00	1165.60	.	1.60
Extra Income #	48.46	51.02†	+ 0.07	6.38
Far East Emg Eqn	124.00	130.00	+ 0.50	0.45
Fixed Interest #	75.62	79.85†	+ 0.02	8.91
Fixed Inc Tst	154.20	161.80	+ 0.40	9.49
Japan	154.90	161.60	+ 0.60	.
Latin American	56.19	59.08	+ 0.11	0.62
Pacific	78.39	82.51	- 0.39	0.32
Property Share	77.12	80.97	+ 0.27	2.17
Gnt Emerging Cos	71.28	77.16	+ 0.29	1.25
UK Growth	57.87	59.63	+ 0.75	1.97
Abbt World Port #	81.53	83.10†	- 0.03	2.99
Ethical	77.37	80.36†	+ 0.05	2.20
Aberdeen Gilt Inc #	50.29	50.34†	.	7.36
AIRWAYS UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0171 256 5866				
Reality Property #	99.61	107.10	.	5.31
ALLCHURCHES INV MGMT SVS LTD				
01452 305 958				
Amdy Income	94.67	100.45	+ 0.31	2.25
Income Builder Inc	83.09	88.28†	+ 0.19	4.32
ALLIED DUNBAR UNIT TSTS PLC				
24 hrs: 01793 610 366 Client dlgs: 01793 514 514				
Balanced Trusts				
Growth & Income	286.70	317.10	+ 0.20	2.91
Capital	523.50	559.60	+ 0.20	1.13
Balanced	856.30	915.20†	+ 0.80	2.29
Accumulator	1663.00	1777.00	+ 1.00	1.76
Income Trusts				
American Income	63.47	67.600	- 0.06	2.36
High Income	478.30	511.10	- 0.50	4.18
Equity Income	367.40	385.70†	+ 0.20	3.89
High Yield	290.30	310.20	+ 0.30	3.67
Gvnt Secondmkt	34.85	36.790	+ 0.02	5.94
International Trusts				
Asia Spec Sit	218.90	234.60	- 2.80	0.05
European Growth	52.68	56.110	- 0.55	0.07
International	152.90	165.30	- 2.10	0.11
Japan	163.20	174.40†	- 2.50	.
Pacific	198.10	214.80†	- 3.20	.
Secs of America	590.80	618.40†	- 10.40	0.13
Wlwide Asset Val	54.61	58.370	- 0.52	0.02
Specialist Trusts				
Asset Value	664.80	710.60†	- 0.90	1.32
Cons & Gilt	52.17	55.780†	+ 0.20	3.80
Smaller Cos	208.90	223.30	+ 1.90	1.02
2nd Smaller Cos	198.20	211.80	+ 1.70	0.87
Recovery	175.00	187.00	- 0.40	1.51
Mat Mkts & Cdty	185.20	195.90	- 2.00	0.19
Dscus Earnings	436.70	468.90†	- 0.20	1.03
Technology	211.90	226.40	- 3.10	.
UK Special Sits	613.40	655.70	+ 1.30	0.95
B & C E UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
01293 526 911				
Crncrd Dlr Pens	718.50	723.10	.	3.04
Foundtn Pnsl Pens	70.59	73.33	.	1.44
BSI-THORNHILL UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0171 600 0033				
Capital	88.38	94.02	- 0.14	0.60
International	65.33	70.56	- 0.08	.
BAILLIE GIFFORD & CO LTD				
0131 222 4242				
America	356.30	378.90	- 0.50	.
Bond	120.30	126.40	- 0.30	5.51
Brit Smlr Cos	117.60	125.40	+ 0.40	1.78
Cons & Gen #	70.52	73.02†	- 0.13	5.17
Europe	278.70	297.00†	- 1.40	0.49
Euro Smlr Cos	122.00	129.60†	- 0.40	0.59
Income Gwth	378.80	404.10†	+ 0.70	4.70
Japan	373.20	390.40	- 1.60	.
Latin American	62.65	67.94	- 0.62	0.76
Pacific	112.00	119.70†	- 0.50	1.02
UK Smlr Cos	58.77	62.52	- 0.45	1.26
Japan Fd	538.00	554.50	- 3.80	.
Mngd Fd	205.80	218.40	- 0.10	2.73
BANK OF IRELAND FUND MGRS LTD				
0171 489 8673				
Brit & Oversis	375.90	397.60	.	0.69
Capital Gwth	133.40	141.10	.	3.04
Wrldwide Opps	221.80	234.80	.	0.94
BARCLAYS UNICORN LTD				
0191 522 4000				
Balanced Trusts				
Gwth & Inc Inc	444.60	473.00	+ 0.40	2.27
European Bd Inc	99.98	103.50	+ 0.10	6.11
Exempt	87.02	92.57	+ 0.12	2.69
Gilt	503.50	545.70	- 2.70	2.30
General	337.60	361.90	+ 0.30	2.22
Property	248.50	266.70†	.	5.05
Trustee	235.50	250.50†	+ 0.30	2.28
Income Trusts				
Cash Inc	100.10	100.10†	+ 0.10	5.61
Distribution (G) #	114.40	115.00†	+ 0.10	6.15
Extra Income #	142.10	151.50	+ 0.30	4.62
Gilt & Fxd Int	59.35	61.18†	- 0.05	7.74
Income #	512.50	553.40	+ 0.40	4.47
Income Builder #	71.06	75.69	- 0.12	5.17
Intl Income	71.95	76.11†	- 0.11	2.45
Growth Trusts - UK				
Capital	149.00	157.40	+ 0.40	1.92
FTSE 100	104.80	111.70†	+ 0.10	2.62
Leisure	179.00	190.90	+ 0.60	1.01
Recovery	513.30	547.60	+ 1.20	2.49
Smlr Cos Inc	53.48	63.36	+ 0.41	2.45
Special Sits	415.80	442.30	+ 0.70	1.80
Growth Trusts - Overseas				
America	176.70	187.00†	- 1.30	0.32
F East Gwth Acc	290.60	309.20	+ 0.10	0.25
Far East Gwth	172.40	183.40†	- 0.10	0.25
Euro Gwth Inc	190.00	201.10	- 0.20	0.48
Jap Gwth	206.70	219.70	- 0.30	0.48
Jap Inc	121.10	128.80	- 0.90	.
Jap Inc Acc	122.50	130.10	- 0.90	.
Japan Smlr Cos	57.43	61.21	- 0.41	.
Worldwide	185.30	207.40	- 0.60	0.36
BARING FUND MANAGERS LTD				
0171 214 1004				
American Growth	133.80	141.50	- 1.40	.
Asia Smlr Cos	153.60	166.10	+ 1.70	.
Convertible	67.68	65.35†	+ 0.11	4.60
Europe	293.60	316.20	- 0.80	0.30
Equity Income #	103.20	110.60	- 0.20	4.28
European Growth	163.30	165.60	+ 0.70	0.60
Emerge	368.90	395.00†	+ 0.10	0.60
German Growth	86.36	91.47	+ 0.23	0.50
Global Bond	71.15	74.83	- 0.24	6.20
Global Growth	140.60	149.10†	- 0.70	0.40
Japan Growth	158.10	178.40	- 0.60	.
Japan Smlr Cos	126.00	133.50	- 0.60	.
Korea Trust	46.28	49.95	- 0.30	.
Pacificlo	147.30	157.30	.	2.00
-do- Accum	279.10	298.20	.	2.00
UK Growth	111.30	119.40	+ 0.20	2.60
UK Smaller Cos	102.40	109.00	+ 0.70	1.90
Select Manager:	88.56	95.02	+ 0.02	1.00
BLACKSTONE FRANKS MT MGRS LTD				
0171 250 3300				
Intl Sech Port Inc	87.66	93.25	- 1.00	.
Special Opnr Inc	59.36	63.19	- 0.20	.
BRITANNIA FUND MGRS LTD				
0141 223 6020				
Balanced Growth	150.75	159.52	+ 2.89	1.53
-do- Accum	175.47	185.63	+ 3.13	1.53
Smaller Cos	160.66	170.00†	+ 0.86	0.58
Higher Yield #	58.10	61.49	- 0.08	4.09
American Gth Inc	103.79	107.84	- 0.08	.
European Growth	164.26	173.85	- 0.47	0.05
-do- Accum	167.59	177.34	- 0.48	0.05
Mngd Portfo Inc	54.08	57.15	- 0.05	1.39
-do- Accum	56.96	57.20	+ 0.06	1.35
Int Cpnt Opps	169.35	179.20	- 0.21	.
Pacific Gth	151.17	160.97	- 0.38	.
UK General #	101.15	107.04†	- 0.13	2.96
-do- Accum #	103.95	116.13	- 0.14	2.96
Japan	47.18	49.91	- 0.31	.
Gilt & Fixed Int #	107.43	105.11†	- 0.28	8.23
BURRAGE UNIT TST MGMT LTD				
0171 480 7210				
Short Dated Gilt	66.65	67.72	.	8.37
CIS UNIT MANAGERS LTD				
0161 837 5060				
Growth	189.50	199.00†	+ 0.40	1.85
UK Growth	230.60	232.00	+ 0.40	2.07
UK Income	154.10	167.60	.	4.27
CANADA LIFE MGMT (UK) LTD				
01707 822 100				
Can Gnrl Dist	238.60	253.80	- 0.10	1.57
-do- Income Dist	131.40	139.20	- 0.20	3.59
-do- Accum	429.90	455.60	+ 1.10	3.59
Gilt & Fxd Int	41.51	43.74	+ 0.04	5.22
Growth Units	364.70	383.60	- 0.20	2.07
Bond	179.20	188.50	- 0.20	6.80
Intl Growth	203.30	218.30	- 0.60	0.18
North American	254.70	270.60	- 2.30	0.09
Far East	297.50	318.60	- 0.40	0.61
UK Smaller Cos	229.20	245.10	+ 2.00	1.17
European	95.12	101.60	- 0.22	0.50
Japanese Growth	38.38	40.65	- 0.30	.
High Income	231.70	247.60	+ 0.50	4.10
CAPEL-CURE MYERS UT MGMT LTD				
0161 831 7433 Dlg 0161 831 7433 Dlg 0161 831 7455				
American & Gen	218.90	229.90	- 1.40	.
European Inc	95.04	100.90	+ 0.33	0.37
Smaller Cos (4-1)	109.80	116.40	+ 1.20	1.51
Growth	563.10	606.50	+ 1.20	1.98
Income & Growth #	484.20	515.30	+ 1.20	3.61
-do- Accum #	732.00	778.80	+ 1.80	3.61
Japan & Gen	54.86	58.21	- 0.24	.
Market Portfolio	12437.6	13256.00	+24.00	1.79
-do- Accum	15370.0	16001.00	+50.00	1.79
Special Sits	132.10	140.60	- 0.20	1.94
High Yield	1545.00	1523.00†	+ 3.00	6.14
CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
0171 606 0701				
Cazenove Portfolio	103.62	110.60	+ 0.01	1.61
American Portfolio	123.14	130.62†	- 0.72	1.02
European Portfolio	135.92	144.09	+ 0.23	0.63
High Income	52.64	53.79	- 0.01	7.41
Japanese Portfolio	56.38	59.79	- 0.43	.
Pacific Portfolio	155.57	167.72†	+ 0.06	1.07
UK Equity	99.63	106.67	+ 0.19	3.34
UK Equity & Bd	59.28	63.61	+ 0.01	6.07
UK Smlr Cos	52.32	55.96	+ 0.37	1.25
CENT BD OF FIN OF CHURCH OF ENG				
0171 398 1815				
Inv Fund	782.04	793.66	+14.39	4.31
Fxd Int Sec	156.02	166.64	+ 0.80	9.13
CDF CHARITY FUNDS				
0777 589 1815				
Investment Inc	781.20	793.13	+11.35	4.26
Investment Acc	836.92	938.57	+52.66	.
Fixed Int Inc	128.93	129.44	+ 0.94	8.96
Fixed Int Acc	234.72	235.71	+ 1.70	.
CITY FINANCIAL UT MGRS LTD				
0171 407 5986				
Backtrack Gtd	89.18	94.01	.	5.33
Stock Rec-Tech	43.32	47.111	.	.
Accm Equal Tst	190.42	199.96†	.	0.44
City Fin Assets	87.40	84.43	.	7.82
City Fin Intl	98.72	93.19†	.	0.14
Fixed Hor Cdn	318.85	338.31	.	2.46
Stocktry Yield Gtd	135.67	144.02	.	.
1 Stk Inc/Gth Inc	57.80	60.72†	.	3.52
Stock Utilities	62.03	63.66†	- 0.14	6.86
CITY OF LONDON UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0171 711 0771 Admin: 01277 227 300				
Emerging Markets	51.93	55.10	+ 0.14	.
CLERICAL MEDICAL UT MGRS LTD				
0345 772 233				
American Gwth	80.18	85.30	.	.
Dragon Growth	71.55	76.55	+ 0.10	0.75
Equity High Inc	93.00	99.70†	+ 0.30	4.09
-do- Accum	135.48	145.24	+ 0.49	4.09
Extra Income Inc	27.03	28.47	- 0.02	7.27
Extra Income Acc	29.74	31.30	- 0.02	7.27
European Gwth	63.19	67.65	+ 0.07	0.69
Evergreen	30.14	32.97	+ 0.03	.
General Equity	110.61	117.36	+ 0.36	2.89
Japan Gro Sit	38.17	41.67	- 0.23	.
Pedigree Gwth	66.60	71.34	+ 0.06	2.25
Pfd Sm Cos Inc	37.85	40.70	+ 0.10	2.96
-do- Accum	40.34	43.38	+ 0.17	1.24
Retirement Inc #	28.29	30.60	+ 0.15	5.53
Special Sits	47.50	51.08	+ 0.16	2.34
UK & Overseas	59.70	63.34	- 0.18	0.53
COLONIAL UT MGRS LTD				
01634 898 000				
Balanced	72.57	75.59	.	4.00
Capital	66.16	69.74	.	2.55
High Income	52.73	54.52†	.	6.61
Top 50	59.00	61.45	.	2.49
COMMERCIAL UNION TRUST MGRS LTD				
0181 686 9818				
PRESTIGE PORTFOLIO (PPI FUNDS)				
Income Funds				
Equity Inc	198.63	205.91	+ 0.67	4.44
Long Gilt	44.12	45.95†	- 0.12	6.10
Monthly Inc Plus	50.68	52.69	- 0.01	8.50
Preference Share	47.69	49.64†	- 0.05	7.85
Balanced Funds				
High Yield	143.61	143.88†	+ 0.71	5.70
Managed Fund	77.56	80.79	- 0.02	2.74
UK Growth Funds				
Smaller Cos	54.20	56.46	+ 0.55	1.88
-do- Accum	64.08	66.73	+ 0.65	1.88
UK & General	101.29	105.50	+ 0.99	2.62
-do- Accum	133.35	138.82	+ 0.41	2.86
UK Growth	203.23	211.70	+ 0.29	1.33
International Growth Funds				
Europe Growth	208.08	216.76	+ 0.19	0.67
Far Eastern Gwth	128.69	134.05	- 0.21	0.05
Global Bond	75.12	78.25	- 0.31	6.33
Japan Growth	94.96	98.92	- 0.57	.
North Amer Gwth	238.46	249.42	- 1.83	.
Overseas Growth	83.86	87.35	+ 0.02	0.27
Worldwide Growth	70.98	73.93	- 0.13	.
OTHER CU TRUSTS (NON PPI FUNDS)				
Deposit Fund	92.39	92.39	+ 0.01	5.22
Homebuyer Fund	90.57	94.35	+ 0.11	1.57
Conifer Fund	158.57	168.63	+ 0.61	7.89
CONSISTENT UNIT TST MGMT CO LTD				
0171 407 5966				
Consistent Ut	36.05	38.54	.	4.31
COOKE (HENRY) INV FUNDS LTD				
0800 526 358				
Growth	181.20	192.80	+ 1.40	2.61
Income	75.85	80.69	+ 0.17	4.57
European	75.25	80.05	- 0.01	0.98
Recovery	190.70	202.90	+ 0.90	2.47
CO-OP PENSION FDS UT MGRS LTD				
0171 263 9494				
Equity Dist	969.00	1004.40†	.	3.49
CREDIT SUISSE INV FDS (UK) LTD				
01277 690 370				
Fellowship Tst	112.49	119.50	+ 0.20	1.15
Income #	292.30	310.80	+ 0.60	4.51
-do- Accum #	780.10	829.80	+ 1.80	4.52
Smaller Cos	206.20	251.20†	+ 0.80	0.66
-do- Accum	294.20	312.90	+ 0.90	0.66
Gth Portfolio	104.70	111.30	+ 0.10	1.27
High Inc Port #	84.82	90.20	+ 0.18	4.21
DIMENSIONAL TST MGMT LTD				
0171 470 1894				
Euro Small Cos	1615.70	1664.30†	.	.
Japan Small Cos	887.36	902.55†	.	0.01
UK Small Cos	2199.10	2265.60	.	2.88
US Small Cos	2130.00	2200.40†	.	0.85
DISCRETIONARY UNIT FUND MGRS				
0171 377 8819				
Dsc Inc	237.70	250.10†	.	3.14
EAGLE STAR UNIT MGRS LTD				
01242 577 555				
UK Balanced Inc	178.00	189.30†	+ 0.50	1.71
UK High Inc Inc	185.30	197.10	+ 0.70	3.81
-do- Accum	253.90	270.10	+ 0.90	3.81
UK Fixd & F I Inc	59.86	63.50†	+ 0.10	5.83
Enhnmnt Opps	182.50	189.00	+ 0.10	0.92
UK Smlr Cos #	71.19	75.73	+ 0.40	1.06
Euro Income Inc	50.88	54.12	+ 0.10	7.34
EDINBURGH UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0345 090 525				
American	178.70	189.10	.	0.42
Commodities #	23.11	24.55†	+ 0.22	5.70
Equity Income #	145.50	154.60†	+ 0.60	3.88
Enhanced	62.55	68.29	.	0.80
Financial	57.54	61.14	+ 0.02	1.47
Growth & Inc #	293.40	316.10	+ 2.70	2.75
High Dist #	183.10	194.50†	+ 1.20	4.37
International	419.80	446.00	- 0.90	0.11
Int Cap Inc	104.90	111.60	- 0.10	2.42
Latin American	30.15	32.00	+ 0.11	.
Pacific	81.95	87.11	- 0.21	.
Prel High Inc	23.09	24.53	+ 0.20	7.34
Tokyo	184.30	195.10	- 1.20	.
UK Smaller Cos	262.50	278.90	+ 6.20	1.08
Wlwide Wld Trusts				
European Gwth	306.20	344.80	.	1.04
Jap Smlr Co	338.30	358.70	- 1.70	.
Nth Amer	429.90	455.90	.	0.64
UK Inc & Gwth	260.60	278.50	+ 0.80	2.66
ELY PLACE UNIT MGRS LTD				
0171 242 0242				
Gilt Director Dlrg	118.10	126.31	.	1.11
Growth Acc	257.53	275.06	.	1.11
	618.22	661.20	.	6.06
ENDURANCE FUND MGMT LTD				
0777 370 7261				
Endurance Fd	227.20	241.70	.	1.23
EQUITABLE UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
01256 461 480				
European	90.00	94.74	- 0.35	1.76
Ethical Tst	45.61	48.01	- 0.20	1.02
Far Eastern	385.39	300.31	- 1.22	1.68
High Income	144.56	152.17	+ 0.21	4.85
UK Index Trckng	53.48	56.29	+ 0.03	3.14
Intl Growth	137.05	144.26	- 1.07	0.52
North American	145.90	154.63	- 3.10	1.67
Pelican	147.60	155.61	- 0.14	3.07
Smaller Cos	73.95	77.84†	+ 0.18	2.77
Special Sits	91.06	95.85	+ 0.06	3.08
Tst of Inv Tsts	215.52	226.86	.	1.23
EVERMORE FUND MGMT LTD				
0171 407 5966				
Smaller Cos Inc	237.73	252.90	+ 3.55	2.34
Smaller Cos Acc	429.37	456.70	+ 6.43	2.34
Recovery	58.99	62.76†	+ 0.80	3.22
Recovery Acc	61.56	65.49†	+ 0.83	2.22
EXETER FUND MANAGERS LTD				
01392 412 144				
Global Growth	93.16	99.92	- 0.15	.
Fd of Inv Tsts	52.28	55.76	+ 0.03	0.52
High Income #	39.86	42.72	- 0.02	10.77
Warrant	43.30	46.96	+ 0.11	.
Zero Preference	44.83	47.56†	- 0.01	.
FAMILY INVESTMENT MGMT LTD				
01273 220 707				
Family Fund Tst	97.39	103.60	+ 0.30	2.56
Unions Charities	327.30	348.10	+ 3.00	2.03
FIDELITY INVESTMENT SERVS LTD				
Callbrge, Private Clients 0800 414 181				
Cash Fund				
Cash Fund	100.00	100.00	.	5.60
Bond Funds				
Intl Bond	26.95	27.95	- 0.12	5.57
Strategic Inc	27.39	28.521	+ 0.01	5.67
Income Funds				
High Income	27.22	28.67	+ 0.04	5.38
Income Plus	135.10	144.90†	- 0.30	3.93
European Income	50.07	53.24	+ 0.04	2.35
UK Div Gnth	32.97	33.06	+ 0.08	2.13
Equity Funds				
ASEAN	38.88	43.09	+ 0.05	.
Americas	327.10	341.20	- 1.60	.
Asia Spec Sits	181.65	193.60	- 0.80	.
Japan Smaller Cos	26.17	27.86	- 0.16	.
European	226.88	241.20	.	0.56
Eastern Opps	75.63	84.86	- 0.08	0.02
Global Prin	30.78	32.73	+ 0.05	0.34
UK Growth	127.10	135.20	+ 0.40	1.54
Canada & Inc	186.30	198.10	+ 0.60	2.34
Intl PEP	49.07	52.18	+ 0.02	1.05
Japan Smlr Cos	70.05	75.30	- 0.48	.
Japan	152.40	161.90	- 1.00	.
Managed Intl	360.20	371.70	- 1.50	0.50
Moneybuilder	48.04	50.22	+ 0.07	.
Recovery	62.78	66.76	+ 0.50	1.10
South E Asia	185.50	197.90	- 1.00	0.93
Special Sits	579.40	607.50	+ 4.90	0.55
Specialist Funds				
Cash Accum Units	117.21	117.21	+ 0.01	5.80
FLEMING PRIVATE FUND MGMT LTD				
0171 614 2700				
Balanced #	149.40	151.80	.	1.57
Pfleming Pfl Inc #	98.36	98.90†	- 0.06	6.23
Cap Prtnrs	160.68	162.82†	.	1.37
General Opps	144.40	146.50	.	4.14
Growth Inc	38.17	39.55	+ 0.08	1.37
Prtners Portfolio	432.10	450.00	.	1.22
FOREIGN & COLONIAL UNIT MGT				
Dlg. 01277 680 388 Admin/Vol 01277 680 350				
Euro Smlr Cos	158.90	168.80	- 0.40	0.21
Grow Asian	127.60	137.70	+ 1.10	.
High Income	21.67	23.04	- 0.04	9.77
UK Income #	119.80	123.40	- 0.20	4.04
UK Smaller Cos	413.30	441.00	.	.

For Footer & Unit trusts see Footer

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
FRANKLINGTON UNIT MGMT LTD				
Enq 0171 330 6900 Dealing 0345 775511				
American Growth	77.43	82.40	- 0.27	.
-do- Accum	77.43	82.40	- 0.27	.
Amer Smlr Cos	638.10	683.50	- 2.70	.
-do- Accum	651.80	697.10	- 3.00	.
Capital Tst	470.20	431.80	- 1.80	1.09
-do- Accum	603.70	634.40	- 2.60	1.09
Cont Smlr Cos	58.52	61.93	+ 0.11	1.31
-do- Accum	62.27	65.88	+ 0.12	1.31
Convertible	143.60	152.80†	+ 0.60	5.10
-do- Accum	318.30	338.60†	+ 1.60	5.10
Emerging Markets	61.74	64.99†	+ 0.02	0.30
-do- Accum	63.24	65.52†	+ 0.03	0.30
European	150.10	159.00	+ 0.50	0.50
-do- Accum	159.00	167.40	+ 0.50	0.50
Extra Income	412.30	434.00	+ 0.70	4.45
-do- Accum	656.50	691.10	+ 1.20	4.45
Financial	177.70	187.80	+ 0.30	0.46
-do- Accum	188.80	198.70	+ 0.20	0.46
Gilt Trust	93.78	89.76	.	8.65
-do- Accum	99.19	103.20	.	8.65
Hong Kong Fund Inc	251.30	264.50	+ 1.90	.
-do- Accum	251.30	264.50	+ 1.90	.
Income & Growth	237.90	250.40†	+ 2.40	3.61
-do- Accum	384.40	404.60†	+ 4.00	3.61
Intl Growth	420.60	442.70	.	.
-do- Accum	467.10	491.70	.	.
Japan & Gen	143.20	150.70	- 0.80	.
-do- Accum	144.60	152.20	- 0.80	.
Monthly Inc #	206.30	219.50†	+ 0.60	4.38
-do- Accum #	207.60	220.90†	+ 0.60	4.38
Managed Port Inc	121.20	127.60	+ 0.20	1.40

Jon Ashworth and **Paul Durman** on BZW's woes

Pressure time at securities house

Barclays de Zoete Wedd (BZW), the securities house, has dismissed speculation about the future of Simon de Zoete, the senior director who led the ill-fated defence of Northern Electric. The Takeover Panel row, coupled with a poor showing in the 1996 mergers and acquisitions league, has left BZW awkwardly placed for the new year.

Mr de Zoete, who reputedly earns more than £1 million a year in his role as a vice-chairman of BZW, was directly implicated in the Takeover Panel's decision to extend the bid for Northern.

The extension gave CE Electric of America crucial time in which to muster enough shares to claim victory. The panel said BZW did not disclose its entitlement to a £250,000 discretionary fee — on top of a £1.5 million flat fee — when it sought late permission to buy Northern shares. The subsequent purchase of a stake of more than 2 per cent was crucial to the Northern defence.

Mr de Zoete was not present at the Takeover Panel meeting during which BZW was accused of being selective in its disclosure. He was in Scotland on business, and only noted a reference to a flat fee. The panel's ruling was faxed to him the following day. He returned to London that evening for a meeting with BZW's lawyers. A panel member was not contacted until 10.15pm.

It is not clear who represented BZW in Mr de Zoete's absence. He could not be contacted yesterday. BZW said his future with the firm was secure, and dismissed suggestions to the contrary as "malicious gossip".

Mr de Zoete is one of the City's most experienced hands. Chairman of BZW Equities since March 1994, he advised Granada on its bids for both LWT and Forte. He advised on BTR's £2.06 billion bid for Nylex; Pearson's £600 million BSkyB stake disposal; GEC's £835 million bid for VSEL; and BTR's £2.1 billion bid for Hawker Siddeley.

Mr de Zoete is a great nephew of Johnny Bevan, senior partner of de Zoete & Bevan, which was acquired by Barclays in 1986. He joined de Zoete & Bevan in 1966, making general partner three years later, and rose to become chairman of de Zoete & Bevan in its later role as the corporate broking arm of BZW.

Simon de Zoete, a BZW vice-chairman, was implicated in the Takeover Panel's decision to extend the bid for Northern Electric

The Northern affair has met with a mixed response. One senior merchant banker said: "I feel very, very sorry for BZW. I think they've been harshly treated. It's bad luck that they did not make full disclosure at the first opportunity. I don't know why they did not, but I don't believe it was for any malign reason."

He said that Mr de Zoete's absence must have been a factor, adding: "It's BZW's fault for not being able to put all the facts on the table the first time round. Simon de Zoete was up in Scotland and he's taken a lot of flak. Why the hell wasn't he there?

"I cannot imagine that, where a transaction was taking place, we would not have ensured that the relevant directors who knew what was happening were present. BZW have brought it upon themselves."

The pledging of an additional fee in relation to the Northern bid was not in itself unusual. Clients frequently agree to pay investment banks an additional fee if their work on a deal is exceptionally good or effective.

The affair comes at a sensitive time for BZW, which did not fare well in the annual *Acquisitions Monthly* survey of mergers and acquisitions advisers. It was ranked thirteenth, having worked on £5.7 billion of deals in 1996. Philip Healey, editor of *Acquisitions Monthly*, thinks the bad impression created by the Northern Electric row could hamper BZW's attempt to build up its corporate finance business.

"Unfortunately, today, bad media coverage stays much longer [in the minds of clients] than it used to. UK investment banks have got to be much cleaner on fees." The Northern incident increases pressure on BZW's chief executive, Bill Harrison, who took office in September. He was brought in as successor to David Band, who died in March while on a skiing holiday. Mr Harrison's remuneration — including a guaranteed £1.25 million bonus in his first year — attracted further unwelcome publicity for the firm. Donald Brydon resigned as deputy chief executive when Mr Harrision joined.

Mr Healey says BZW has one chance to get it right. He said: "This is really their last chance to make it big in mergers and acquisitions. If they can't do it in the takeover boom of the next year to 18 months, they never will do. But BZW will do well, because Bill Harrison is a dynamo."

Opportunities Down Under lure investors

UK banks are tipped to take a look at Australia, says **Rachel Bridge**

Among British companies learning to say "G'day, mate" in 1996, as more UK firms headed for Australia, were PowerGen and National Power. The electricity generators, both led consortia to snap up power stations for A$2.4 billion apiece in the state of Victoria's big electricity sell-off.

British Aerospace also made its presence felt, acquiring AWA Defence Industries, one of Australia's largest defence companies, and winning a A$900 million (£450 milion) contract to supply trainer jets to the Australian air force.

Others making forays included Grand Metropolitan, which bought the Pasta House fresh pasta business for A$100 million; Premier Oil, which successfully bid for Discovery Petroleum at a cost of A$107.8 million; Daily Mail and General Trust, which bought a string of radio stations; and Chubb Security, which acquired a fire protection business for A$220 million.

Marks & Spencer caused a huge stir Down Under by saying that it intended to open its first two stores in Australia in 1997.

Companies from continental Europe were at it, too. AXA, the French insurance group, secured a 51 per cent stake in National Mutual, the insurer, and the Dutch transport company KPN spent A$2 billion to acquire TNT.

A Sydney consultant advising UK and US companies says that overseas players are attracted by Australia's combination of a skilled multilingual workforce, sound economic fundamentals and a growing middle class — and its handy position as a stepping stone into Asia. The secret of success, he says, is to invest in the right sectors, with media and telecommunications turning into no-go areas for foreign investors. He says: "You really have to separate out the politically sensitive investments from the others because there is no question that walls are being quietly erected in some areas such as media to protect Australia's interests."

Indeed, one person booking out was Conrad Black, the Canadian media magnate, who sold his 25 per cent stake in John Fairfax, the Australian press group, in frustration at the Government's refusal to let him increase his shareholding.

The past year has also seen big differences in the performance of particular sectors. Peter Horn, economist with SBC Warburg, says that although overall GDP growth has been running at 3.5 per cent, the Australian economy is effectively two-speed, with mining and telecommunications chalking up 5 to 6 per cent growth and retailing stuck at 1.5 per cent.

Another factor affecting investment is the view that the Coalition Government, which came to power in March, lacks the resolve to push through industrial reforms.

The sectors to watch in 1997, say analysts, will be mining and banking. A major report into banking — due by March — is expected to relax restraints on ownership, paving the way for takeovers and mergers. Bank of Scotland last year took over, for A$900 million, BankWest, and analysts expect Australia's largest banks, ANZ, Westpac and National Australia, to be scrutinised by potential British buyers in 1997.

Mining is seen as ripe for takeover activity, with a falling gold price and the need for consolidation to rationalise its cost structure.

Hoping for action in 1997 are BAA, the British airport operator, National Express and Serco, the facilities management group, which are waiting for Australia's much-heralded A$4 billion airport privatisation. In 1997, apparently, it really will happen.

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Michael Clark on the market's winners and losers in 1996

FT-SE sticks to the high road

The London stock market ended 1996 just as it began the year — on a high note. At the start of the year the FT-SE 100 index was at 3,687.9. There were some who said it could never last, that equities were running ahead of events, but 12 months later, it is again nudging new highs, closing last night at 4,118.5, a rise on the year of 11.7 per cent. Undeterred by low interest rates, investors confidently ploughed their money into the equity market where they were quick to reap the benefits of a strong economy.

It was a year when the massed ranks of the utility companies continued to be snapped up by predators and Granada turned its attention to Forte in what became one of the most acrimonious bid battles in living memory. Levels of bid speculation continued to intensify towards the end of the year promising, hopefully, a lively start to 1997.

Some of the capital gains achieved by the high-flyers in 1996 can only be described as staggering. Winning hands down with a leap of 680 per cent from 49½p to 386½p was Blacks Leisure, the sportswear retailer, which benefited from the boom in sportswear fashion.

Profits last year soared more than fivefold to £3.9 million as the clamour for popular brand names such as Nike, Reebok and Adidas intensified. Blacks outpaced bigger rivals such as Olympus, Sears' ill-fated sports retail chain. The man behind Blacks' revival was Simon Bentley, chairman, who joined the company back in 1989. He improved performance by shedding the footwear operations and the Miss Sam women's wear wholesaler.

In fact, the Blacks performance was so strong that it was more than 80 per cent up on its nearest challenger, Jarvis, the building and construction group, which finished the year 506 per cent up at 142½p.

One deal secured Jarvis's future — its acquisition of British Rail's Northern Infrastructure Maintenance division in June, for £9 million. The returns were immediate with the group posting a ninefold increase in pre-tax profits to £4.4 million. Only two years ago the struggling construction company was deep in the red. It did not take the City long to realise the benefits to the group of the deal.

BBB Design put in a late surge to finish in third spot with a jump of 416 per cent to 77½p after Neville Buch announced plans to take a near 30 per cent stake in the group. Mr Buch built up Blenheim Exhibitions before it was sold to United News & Media a few months ago. Clearly the market hopes he can repeat the task with BBB Design.

In fourth and fifth place respectively were Ferrum Holdings — up 366 per cent from just 1½p to 7p after the Walsall engineering group returned to the black for the first time in four years — and Abacus Recruitment, also returning to the black and seeing its price soar from 18p to 84½p, a rise of 369 per cent.

But there was also demand for some of the heavier price issues with Celtic, the AIM-listed Scottish Premier League side, scoring straight from the kick-off after its flotation in September.

The shares finished the year at £38,500 each, a leap of 487 per cent. It is a pity that the group has not been able to maintain that sort of success on the field.

It was inevitable that with the pay-per-view revolution that dominated football in 1996 that other football clubs would also benefit. The trickle of clubs applying for a listing turned to a flood and the share prices of the more established clubs improved with leaps and bounds.

Naturally enough, Manchester United, whose chief executive is Martin Edwards, led the way with a jump into eighth place as the price rose 240 per cent to 667p closely followed by rival Tottenham Hotspur, up 178 per cent at 624p, in twenty-first slot.

The market as a whole may have enjoyed a record breaking run, but there were still some casualties on the way. The worst performing share of 1996 was Clubpartners International, the group which runs golf courses. Its price collapsed this year by 92 per cent from 31p to 2½p.

Late last year the price stood at 13p but tumbled to 2½p after the company announced it had received a bid at below the ruling price. In fact, after its failure to acquire The Drift Golf Club, potential suitors are discussing an offer price in the region of just 1p a share.

Lionheart, the paint brushes and home-improvement group, which used to call itself Spong, was an early casualty of 1996 after following up heavier losses with details of a drastic restructuring programme. It made the group the second biggest loser of the year with a drop from 73p to 7¾p or almost 90 per cent.

Memory Corporation, which sells repaired microchips, saw its stock market value come tumbling down after the price for perfect microchips on world markets also dived from $400 to $70.

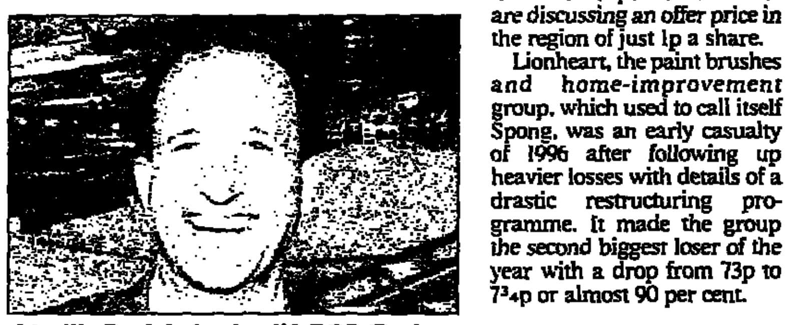
Increased losses and a boardroom reshuffle followed. The company, which at one stage was worth £360 million, is now capitalised at just £44 million. Its shares finished 85 per cent down at 60p.

Profit warnings and news of growing losses littered 1996. The economy may have been going from strength to strength, but companies still struggled.

Among the casualties were Applied Distribution, down 79 per cent at 40p, Haemocell, 85 per cent down at 3¾p, Jacques Vert, 82 per cent off at 32½p, and Telspec, the electronic equipment specialist, 77½ per cent lower at 172½p. Yorkshire Food Group, whose chairman is Mike Firth, was down 81 per cent at 14½p.

Simon Bentley engineered a staggering 680 per cent leap in the Blacks Leisure share price

Martin Edwards saw success off the field


Neville Buch helped to lift BBB Design

Mike Firth experienced an 81 per cent fall

STOCK MARKET MICHAEL CLARK

London shares end year at record high

WITH a last-gasp effort, share prices on the London stock market ended the last day of 1996 at their highest levels ever.

It was, however, hardly the rip-roaring performance that some investors had been hoping for. The FT-SE 100 index closed 2.8 up, at an all-time high of 4,118.5, having briefly touched an intra-day high of 4,123.2 after recovering from an opening fall of almost seven points. That is a rise of 11.7 per cent, or 429.2 points, on last year's closing level of 3,689.3 and far short of the 20.3 per cent rise enjoyed by investors in 1995. The FT-SE mid 250 also rose 11.6 per cent year-on-year, to 4,490.4.

Turnover was the lowest of the year, with a meagre 204 million shares having changed hands by the close of the shortened trading session.

Of the top 100 shares, 57 closed up on the day, 34 were down and nine were unchanged. The biggest gain was in **Redland**, up 6½p, or 1.81 per cent, at 366½p as a total of 468,815 shares were traded.

Another big mover among the top 100 was **Enterprise Oil**, 11p better, at 648½p, on the back of revived bid hopes, a strong oil price and the cold weather.

British Aerospace managed to hold on to the previous day's strong gains, ending the session 4p dearer at £12.80. Some brokers take the view that the group could build on its recent achievements in 1997. Construction of a new range of Airbus jumbo jets will benefit the group, which has a 20 per cent stake in the Airbus Industrie consortium. There is also persistent talk of a link-up with GEC after the recent announcement of the £8 billion merger between Boeing and McDonnell Douglas. GEC was 1p easier, at 382p.

BTR, up 3p at 284p, has also been enjoying support on the back of new year share tips. The price lost ground in 1996, but is expected to benefit from restructuring proposals recently announced.

Other companies enjoying a good showing on the form card, and likely to attract institutional support in 1997, included **Cortecs International**, up 8½p at 184p, **Biocompatibles International**, 20p dearer at 820p, **Blacks Leisure**, 21½p higher at 386½p, **Close Brothers**, 22½p up at 359p, and the former high-flyer **Microvitec**, up 3¾p at 28½p, having crashed from a peak of of 71½p during the first few weeks of 1996.

The decision to scrap paying a dividend brought an initial dip in the price of **Rossmont** before it recovered to close all-square at 6p. Brokers said that the group's up-beat comments about future prospects helped to save the day. The building materials group says that the acquisition of Dunham-Bush will enhance long-term growth considerably and provide scope to make further acquisitions in the medium term.

However, the continuing depressed conditions of the building industry, and cutbacks in local authority spending, have hit the group's two main subsidiaries hard. Dunham-Bush made a loss, and Santric achieved only a small profit. Overall last year, the group achieved a small deficit of £222,000, against a profit last time of £209,000.

GWR rose 3½p to 187½p after hitting the acquisition trail. The independent, local radio broadcaster has made an agreed bid for Hereford and Worcester's leading commercial operator, Radio Wyvern, for almost £4 million. The deal values shares in Radio Wyvern at 755p each.

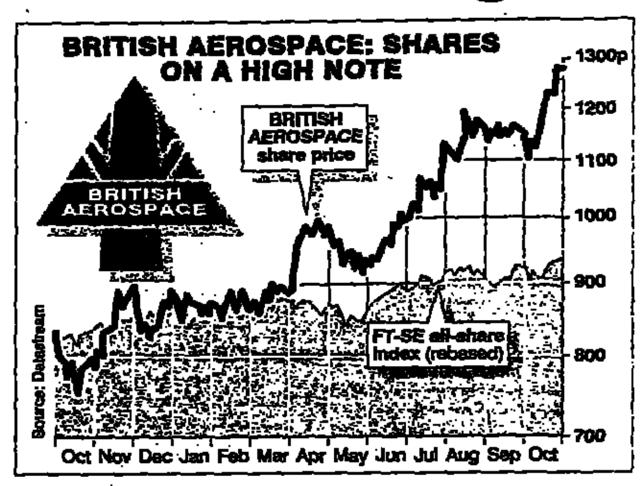
The battle for control of the property group **UK Estates**, unchanged at 26½p, has stepped up a gear with the predator Ashquay demanding answers to a number of questions. Ashquay has a bid on the table at the moment, valuing UK Estates at £21.1 million. However, it wants to know why the board of UK Estates spent £520,000 buying back the company's own shares for its employee share trust and not for its shareholders. Harry Sproule, Ashquay's chief executive, described it as an abuse of of power by using the company's money in such a manner.

MAID, the publishing group, was steady at 201½p after the resignation of Bill Nash as director of information and technology.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** Prices closed mixed on the final day of the year, with the shortened session deterring investors from opening fresh positions. Instead, fund managers concentrated on book-squaring before making an early start for the new year festivities.

In the futures pit, business slumped to its lowest level of the year, with just 4,000 contracts completed as the March series of the long gilt closed all-square at £109 15/16.

In longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 gained £1/16 to £103¾. In shorts, Treasury 8 per cent 2000 slipped £1/32 to £102¾.



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Wall Street money machine ends year with a flourish

Richard Thomson looks at the remarkable performance of the Dow Jones

As the remarkable year of 1996 drew to a close, a substantial number of fund managers, investment bankers and stockbrokers on Wall Street were suffering from what can only be described as acrophobia — a dread of being at a great height.

It was not because they were standing on their windowsills wondering whether to jump but because they could hardly believe how much money they were making from the stock market. This appears to have triggered another serious condition: vertigo, a dizzy, confused state of mind.

It is probably fair to say that at the start of the year no one on Wall Street expected the stock market to rise to its present heights. During 1995 the Dow Jones industrial average hit 5,100, a 35 per cent rise, in the third year of a bull market, and it seemed absurd to expect much more. The bravest analysts predicted 5,800 at the end of 1996.

But to general astonishment, the Dow sailed through that level in the summer, surged on to 6,000 by autumn, and ended the year above 6,500 — a rise of more than 25 per cent. In the process it broke all previous bull-market records for a continuous rise without a 10 per cent correction. Its buoyancy gave heart to most of the rest of the world's stock markets, which also rose strongly in the Dow's wake.

Yet beneath all the exuberance there was an undercurrent of concern. There was no agreement on why the market was so strong, how long it would last, or whether it was going too far. As the year wore on, concern gave way to bewilderment — and fear.

The year began by living up to the predictions. Share prices bounced around like a superball, but made little overall headway. Some experts such as Jeffrey Vinik, manager of Fidelity's Magellan Fund, the largest mutual fund in the US, even dared to turn bearish. He moved a large part of the $55 billion fund out of stocks into bonds. It made sense: the market was beginning to look overvalued, corporate profit growth was expected to slow down. The bull market seemed to be over.

But it wasn't. By the end of winter it was clear that Mr Vinik had missed out on the continuing rise in stock prices and he came in for bitter criticism. Eventually he resigned, but the moral of his fall was not lost on other fund managers, who concluded that the only safe thing to do as long as shares showed any strength was to keep buying. However sceptical they might be about the Dow's rise they simply could not afford to ignore it. That by itself did a lot to support prices.

In May the Dow peaked at 5,778 and then started to slide. A sell-off began that almost turned into a panic as investors worried that the long-feared correction had arrived. But after a 7 per cent drop, the decline petered out and prices stabilised. Buyers picked up stock cheaply and prices started to rise again.

Then came November. For no easily discernible reason the market suddenly took off in a frenzy of buying and the Dow shot up 492 points, or 8.2 per cent, to breach 6,500. The acrophobia grew worse.

This was a record year in America for private investment in the stock market. Baby-boomers now moving into middle age have been pumping pre-retirement money into the stock market at the rate of about $20 billion a month for more than a year.

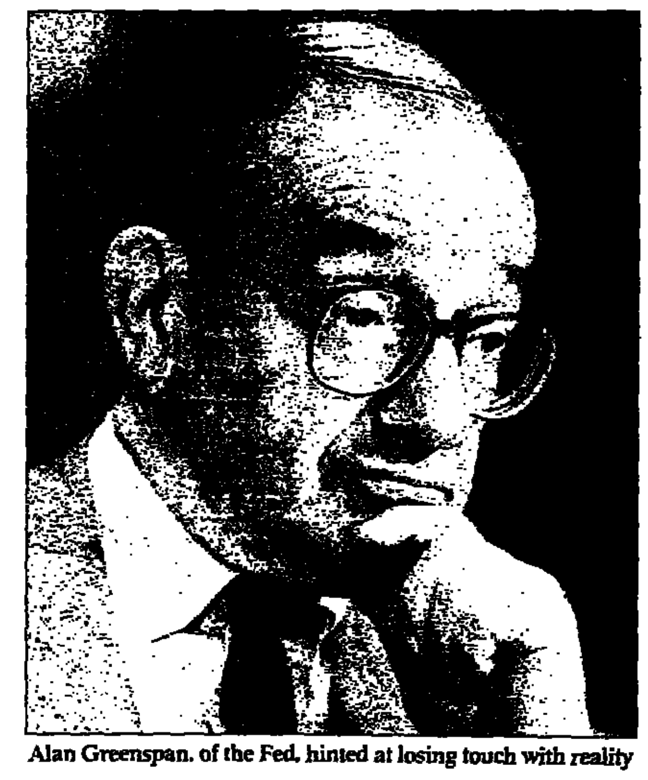
More than $220 billion has gone into mutual funds and almost all went straight into stocks. That dwarfs the rate of private investment in the market for any previous period. Although the private investors' contribution represents only a small fraction of the total stock market capitalisation, it has had a crucial effect. Ten years ago mutual funds accounted for about 18 per cent of turnover, but in 1996 that share rose to nearly half.

Indeed, the buying frenzy has been so intense that some analysts believe the market's rise can be attributed almost entirely to the mentality of private investors and fund managers. "It's all psychology," said Michael Metz, equity strategist for Oppenheimer. "For the past few hundred points the market has been fuelled by the simple fact that it is going up. If you're going to keep your job as a professional money manager, you have got to be in there."

And that, as everyone who lived through the crash of 1987 knows, is when markets turn into bubbles. After the November surge, vertigo became the dominant feeling. In early December Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, indicated he thought the market was losing touch with reality, which threw not only New York but London, Tokyo and handful of other markets into a panic. Yet again, prices recovered, but days when the Dow seesawed by 70 points or more became commonplace in the run-up to Christmas.

Even then, the buying habit did not desert the market. On December 19 the Dow soared 126.87 points to 6,473.64, the highest single day's rise since October 21, 1987. The herd mentality seemed to be at work again. A symptom of nervousness, however, was that investors went for blue-chip shares, so that while the Dow rose fast other areas did not keep up.

The pre-Christmas surge ended a breathtaking year with a flourish. Naturally, no one is complaining about the profits they have made and no one wants to bail out of the money machine prematurely. But the underlying doubts remain. Mr Metz said: "A lot of people are waiting for an excuse to jump out of the pool." The question is what it will be and when it will come.


Alan Greenspan, of the Fed, hinted at losing touch with reality

NEW YORK: American stocks took a tumble after reports of high consumer confidence and strength in sales of new homes startled the financial markets. Blue chips were off their session lows, but still weak in quiet early trading. The Dow Jones industrial average was down 19.22 to 6,530.15 after slowly climbing off a 30-point deficit. Technology shares showed slight gains. (*Reuter*)

	Dec 31 midday	Dec 30 close
AMP Inc	39	38[illegible]
AMR Corp	89[illegible]	89[illegible]
ASA	34[illegible]	34[illegible]
AT & T	43[illegible]	44
Abbott Labs	52	52[illegible]
Advanced Micro	25[illegible]	25[illegible]
Aetna Life	80[illegible]	81[illegible]
Ahmanson (HF)	33[illegible]	33[illegible]
Air Prod & Chem	69[illegible]	69[illegible]
AirTouch Comm	25[illegible]	25[illegible]
Alberto-Culver B	48[illegible]	48[illegible]
Albertson's	36[illegible]	36[illegible]
Alcan Aluminum	33[illegible]	34
Alco Standard	51[illegible]	51
Allied Signal	68[illegible]	69[illegible]
Alum Co of Am	63[illegible]	63[illegible]
Amax Gold Inc	6[illegible]	6[illegible]
Amerada Hess	58[illegible]	58[illegible]
Amer Brands	49[illegible]	49[illegible]
Amer El Power	41[illegible]	41[illegible]
Amer Express	56[illegible]	57[illegible]
Amer Genl Corp	41[illegible]	41
Amer Home Pr	59[illegible]	59[illegible]
Amer Intl	109[illegible]	110[illegible]
Amer Stores	40[illegible]	40[illegible]
Amer Standard	37[illegible]	37[illegible]
Ameritech	61[illegible]	61[illegible]
Amoco	81[illegible]	82[illegible]
Anheuser-Busch	41[illegible]	41[illegible]
Apple Computer	20[illegible]	21[illegible]
Archer Daniels	22[illegible]	22[illegible]
Armco	4[illegible]	4[illegible]
Armstrng Wrld	69[illegible]	70
Asarco	25[illegible]	24[illegible]
Atl Richfield	134[illegible]	135[illegible]
Auto Data Pro	43[illegible]	44[illegible]
Avery Dennison	35[illegible]	35[illegible]
Avon Products	58	57[illegible]
Baker Hughes	34[illegible]	35[illegible]
Baltm Gas & El	27	27[illegible]
Banc One	44[illegible]	44[illegible]
BankAmerica	101[illegible]	103
Bank of NY	35	35[illegible]
Bankers Tr NY	85[illegible]	87[illegible]
Barnett Banks	41[illegible]	42[illegible]
Bausch & Lomb	36[illegible]	35[illegible]
Baxter Intl	41[illegible]	41[illegible]
Becton Dickinson	44	44[illegible]
Bell Atlantic	66[illegible]	67
Bell Industries	21[illegible]	21[illegible]
BellSouth	41[illegible]	41[illegible]
Black & Decker	30[illegible]	30[illegible]
Block (H&R)	29[illegible]	29[illegible]
Boeing	107[illegible]	109[illegible]
Boise Cascade	31[illegible]	31[illegible]
Bristol Myrs Sq	111[illegible]	110[illegible]
Browning Ferris	26[illegible]	26[illegible]
Brunswick	24[illegible]	24[illegible]
Burlington Nthn	87[illegible]	87[illegible]
CMS Energy Corp	33[illegible]	33[illegible]
CNA Financial	107[illegible]	108
CPC Intl	78	78[illegible]
CSX	42[illegible]	42[illegible]
Campbell Soup	82	81[illegible]
Can Pacific	26[illegible]	26[illegible]
Carolina Pwr	36[illegible]	36[illegible]
Caterpillar	76[illegible]	76
Central & Sw	25[illegible]	25[illegible]
Champion Intl	43[illegible]	43[illegible]
Chase Manhat	91	92
Chevron Corp	65[illegible]	66[illegible]
Chrysler	33[illegible]	33[illegible]
Chubb Corp	54[illegible]	55[illegible]
Cigna Corp	138[illegible]	137[illegible]
Citicorp	105[illegible]	106[illegible]
Clorox	102	102[illegible]
Coastal Corp	49[illegible]	50[illegible]
Coca Cola	53[illegible]	53[illegible]
Coca Cola Ent	48[illegible]	47[illegible]
Colgate-Palmolive	93	93[illegible]
Columbia Gas	64	64[illegible]
ColumbiaHCA	41[illegible]	40[illegible]
Compaq Comp	75[illegible]	73[illegible]
Comp Ass Int	50	49[illegible]
Conagra	50[illegible]	51
Conrail	99[illegible]	99[illegible]
Cons Edison	29[illegible]	29[illegible]
Cons Nat Gas	55[illegible]	55[illegible]
Cooper Inds	43[illegible]	41[illegible]
Corestates	52[illegible]	53[illegible]
Corning Inc	45[illegible]	45[illegible]
Crown Cork	54[illegible]	55
Dana Corp	33	32[illegible]
Dayton Hudson	39[illegible]	39[illegible]
Deere	41[illegible]	41[illegible]
Delta Air Lines	72	71[illegible]
Deluxe Corp	32[illegible]	32[illegible]
Digital Equip	37	36[illegible]
Dillard Dept St	31	31[illegible]
Disney (Walt)	70[illegible]	70
Dominion Res	38[illegible]	38[illegible]
Donnelley (RR)	32	31[illegible]
Dover Corp	50[illegible]	50[illegible]
Dow Chemical	80[illegible]	79[illegible]
Dow Jones	34[illegible]	34[illegible]
Dresser	31[illegible]	31[illegible]
Duke Power	46[illegible]	46[illegible]
Dun & Bradstreet	24[illegible]	24[illegible]
Du Pont	94[illegible]	95[illegible]
Eastman Chem	55[illegible]	55[illegible]

	Dec 31 midday	Dec 30 close
Eastman Kodak	81[illegible]	82[illegible]
Eaton Corp	70[illegible]	69[illegible]
Edison Int	19[illegible]	20[illegible]
Elect Data Sys	43[illegible]	44
Emerson Elec	98[illegible]	98[illegible]
Engelhard Corp	19[illegible]	19[illegible]
Enron Corp	43[illegible]	43[illegible]
Entergy	27[illegible]	28[illegible]
Ethyl Corp	9[illegible]	9[illegible]
Exxon	99[illegible]	99[illegible]
FMC Corp	71	71
FPL Group	46	46[illegible]
Federal Express	44[illegible]	44[illegible]
Fed Nat Mtge	38[illegible]	39[illegible]
First Bk Sys	70[illegible]	71
First Union Rlty	12	12[illegible]
Fleet Finl Grp	50[illegible]	51[illegible]
Fluor Corp	63	63
Ford Motor	32	32[illegible]
GTE Corp	45[illegible]	45[illegible]
Gannett	76	75[illegible]
Gap Inc Del	30[illegible]	31[illegible]
Gencorp	18[illegible]	18[illegible]
Gen Dynamics	70[illegible]	70[illegible]
Gen Electric	100[illegible]	101[illegible]
Gen Mills	65[illegible]	65[illegible]
Gen Motors	55[illegible]	55[illegible]
Gen Reinsurance	158[illegible]	159[illegible]
Gen Signal	43[illegible]	43[illegible]
Genuine Parts	45[illegible]	45[illegible]
Georgia Pac	72[illegible]	72[illegible]
Gillette	76[illegible]	75[illegible]
Glaxo Wellc ADR	32[illegible]	31[illegible]
Goodrich (BF)	40[illegible]	40[illegible]
Goodyear Tire	52[illegible]	51[illegible]
Grt Atl Pac Tea	32	32[illegible]
Great Wstn Fin	29[illegible]	29[illegible]
Halliburton	61[illegible]	62[illegible]
Harcourt General	46[illegible]	47[illegible]
Heinz (HJ)	36[illegible]	36[illegible]
Hercules	43[illegible]	43[illegible]
Hershey Foods	44[illegible]	44[illegible]
Hewlett Packard	51[illegible]	51[illegible]
Hilton Hotels	26[illegible]	26[illegible]
Home Depot	50[illegible]	51[illegible]
Homestake Mng	14[illegible]	14[illegible]
Honeywell	66[illegible]	66[illegible]
Household Intl	91[illegible]	92
Houston Inds	22[illegible]	22[illegible]
Humana	19	19
ITT Corp	43[illegible]	43[illegible]
Illinois Tool	80[illegible]	81[illegible]
Illinova	27[illegible]	28
INCO	32[illegible]	32[illegible]
Ingersoll Rand	45	45[illegible]
Inland Steel	20[illegible]	20
Intel Corp	133[illegible]	133[illegible]
IBM	155	153[illegible]
Intl Flav & Fr	45[illegible]	45[illegible]
Intl Paper	40[illegible]	40[illegible]
James River Va	33[illegible]	33[illegible]
Jhnsn & Jhnsn	51[illegible]	51[illegible]
Kellogg	67	67[illegible]
Kerr-McGee	72[illegible]	73[illegible]
Kimberly-Clark	97	97[illegible]
Kmart	10[illegible]	10[illegible]
Knight-Ridder	39[illegible]	39[illegible]
Lilly (Eli)	75	75
Limited Inc	18[illegible]	18[illegible]
Lincoln Nat	52[illegible]	52[illegible]
Litton	47[illegible]	47[illegible]
Liz Claiborne	39[illegible]	39[illegible]
Lockheed Martin	92[illegible]	91[illegible]
Louisiana Pac	21[illegible]	21[illegible]
MCI Comm	33[illegible]	33[illegible]
Marriott Int	55[illegible]	55[illegible]
Marsh & McLnn	105[illegible]	105[illegible]
Masco Corp	36[illegible]	36
May Dept St	47[illegible]	47[illegible]
Maytag Corp	20[illegible]	20[illegible]
McDonalds	46	46[illegible]
McDonnell D	66[illegible]	65[illegible]
McGraw Hill	46[illegible]	46[illegible]
Mead Corp	58[illegible]	58[illegible]
Medtronic	68[illegible]	68[illegible]
Mellon Bk	73[illegible]	73[illegible]
Merck Inc	81[illegible]	81[illegible]
Merrill Lynch	83[illegible]	83[illegible]
Microsoft	83[illegible]	83[illegible]
Minnesota Mine	84	84[illegible]
Mobil Corp	123[illegible]	123[illegible]
Monsanto	39[illegible]	39[illegible]
Morgan (JP)	99[illegible]	99[illegible]
Motorola Inc	62[illegible]	61[illegible]
Natl Semi	24[illegible]	24[illegible]
Natl Service Ind	37[illegible]	38
Navistar Int	9[illegible]	9[illegible]
NY Times A	38[illegible]	38[illegible]
Newmont Mng	44[illegible]	44[illegible]
Niag Mohawk	9[illegible]	10
Nike B	60[illegible]	61[illegible]
NL Industries	10[illegible]	11
Noram Energy	15[illegible]	15[illegible]
Nordstrom	36	36[illegible]
Norfolk Sthrn	89[illegible]	89[illegible]
Nthn State Pwr	45[illegible]	47[illegible]
Norwest Corp	45[illegible]	45[illegible]
Nynex Corp	49[illegible]	49[illegible]
Occidental Pet	23[illegible]	23[illegible]
Ohio Edison	22[illegible]	22[illegible]

	Dec 31 midday	Dec 30 close
Oracle	42[illegible]	41[illegible]
Oryx Energy Co	24[illegible]	25[illegible]
Overseas Ship	17[illegible]	16[illegible]
Owens Corning	43	42[illegible]
PHH Corp	41[illegible]	42
PPG Industries	56[illegible]	57[illegible]
PNC Bank	38[illegible]	38[illegible]
PP&L Res	23[illegible]	23[illegible]
Paccar Inc	68	67[illegible]
Pacificorp	20[illegible]	20[illegible]
Pac Enterprises	30[illegible]	30[illegible]
Pac Gas & Elect	21[illegible]	21[illegible]
Pac Telesis	37[illegible]	37[illegible]
Pall Corp	25[illegible]	25[illegible]
Parker Hannifin	39[illegible]	38[illegible]
Peco Energy	25[illegible]	25[illegible]
Penney (JC)	49	48[illegible]
Pennzoil	57[illegible]	57[illegible]
Pepsico	30	30
Pfizer	84[illegible]	83[illegible]
Pharm & Upjhn	40	40[illegible]
Phelps Dodge	68	68[illegible]
Philip Morris	115[illegible]	114[illegible]
Phillips Pet	45[illegible]	45[illegible]
Pitney Bowes	57[illegible]	56[illegible]
Polaroid	43[illegible]	44[illegible]
PriceCostco	25[illegible]	25[illegible]
Procter & Gmbl	109[illegible]	109[illegible]
Providian	51[illegible]	51[illegible]
Pub Serv E & G	27[illegible]	27[illegible]
Quaker Oats	38[illegible]	38[illegible]
Ralston Purina	74[illegible]	74
Raychem Corp	80[illegible]	80[illegible]
Raytheon	49[illegible]	48[illegible]
Reebok Intl	42	42[illegible]
Reynolds Metals	57[illegible]	57[illegible]
Rockwell Intl	61[illegible]	61[illegible]
Rohm & Haas	82[illegible]	80[illegible]
Royal Dutch	172[illegible]	172[illegible]
Rubbermaid	22[illegible]	23
SBC Comms	53[illegible]	53[illegible]
Safeco Corp	40[illegible]	40[illegible]
St Paul's Cos	59[illegible]	59[illegible]
Salomon Inc	47[illegible]	47[illegible]
Sara Lee Corp	38	38[illegible]
Schering Plough	66[illegible]	65[illegible]
Schlumberger	101[illegible]	102[illegible]
Seagram	40[illegible]	41[illegible]
Sears Roebuck	46[illegible]	47[illegible]
Shell Trans	102[illegible]	102[illegible]
Sherwin Wllms	56[illegible]	57
Skyline Corp	25[illegible]	25
Snap-On-Tools	35[illegible]	36[illegible]
Southern Co	22[illegible]	22[illegible]
Sprint Corp	40[illegible]	39[illegible]
Stanley Works	27[illegible]	28[illegible]
Sun Company	24[illegible]	24[illegible]
Sun Microsys	25[illegible]	26[illegible]
Suntrust	50[illegible]	51[illegible]
Supervalu	28[illegible]	28[illegible]
Sysco Corp	33[illegible]	34
TRW Inc	50[illegible]	50[illegible]
TCC Inds	1[illegible]	1[illegible]
Tandem Comp	13[illegible]	13[illegible]
Tandy Corp	44[illegible]	46[illegible]
Temple Inland	54[illegible]	54[illegible]
Tenneco	44[illegible]	44[illegible]
Texaco	98[illegible]	98[illegible]
Texas Inst	64[illegible]	64[illegible]
Texas Utilities	41	41
Textron	94[illegible]	94[illegible]
Time Warner	37[illegible]	37[illegible]
Times-Mirror A	52[illegible]	52[illegible]
Timken	46[illegible]	45[illegible]
Torchmark	51	51[illegible]
Toys R Us	30[illegible]	31
Transamerica	79[illegible]	80[illegible]
Travelers	46[illegible]	45[illegible]
Tribune	79[illegible]	79[illegible]
Tyco Inc	52[illegible]	52[illegible]
UST Inc	33	33[illegible]
UAL	63[illegible]	62[illegible]
US Inds	34	32[illegible]
US West Comm	32[illegible]	32[illegible]
USX Marathon	24[illegible]	24[illegible]
Unicom	27[illegible]	27[illegible]
Unilever NV	175[illegible]	175[illegible]
Union Camp	48[illegible]	48[illegible]
Union Carbide	41[illegible]	41[illegible]
Union Pacific	61[illegible]	61[illegible]
Unisys Corp	6[illegible]	6[illegible]
USAfK Group	23[illegible]	24
USF&G Corp	21[illegible]	21[illegible]
US Life	33	32[illegible]
United Tech	66[illegible]	66[illegible]
Unocal Corp	41[illegible]	41[illegible]
VF Corp	68	67[illegible]
WMX Tech	34	33[illegible]
Wal-Mart Stores	23[illegible]	23[illegible]
Warner-Lambert	77	77[illegible]
Wells Fargo	274[illegible]	276[illegible]
Westinghouse El	19[illegible]	19[illegible]
Weyerhaeuser	47[illegible]	47[illegible]
Whirlpool	48[illegible]	46[illegible]
Whitman	23[illegible]	23[illegible]
Winn Dixie	32	32[illegible]
Woolworth	22	22[illegible]
Wrigley (Wm) Jr	56[illegible]	57[illegible]
Xerox	52[illegible]	52[illegible]
Yellow Corp	14[illegible]	14[illegible]

Lang welcomes CBI stand against social chapter

Politicians warned over pay inflation

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

CHAMBERS of commerce today warn an incoming government of whichever political persuasion to take action if necessary against signs of wage inflation in order to prevent any return to boom and bust economic cycles.

With a general election now only months away, business leaders are gearing themselves up for what they believe will be a ferocious political argument — including preparing themselves for a possible change of administration.

Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade, welcomed a new commitment from business to opposing the EU social chapter, which a Labour government would sign up to, ending the UK opt-out from it.

Mr Lang said that this clearly showed the aligned interests of business and the Conservatives, and the hollowness of Labour's claims to be the party now closest to business. He said: "The Conservative Party is the party of business, and the CBI's policy priorities are our priorities. They show that Labour's claim to be the party of business are a fraud."

Mr Lang was responding to the CBI's new year statement, which made clear its opposition to the social chapter, and to Labour's proposed windfall tax on privatised utilities.

Sir Colin Marshall, CBI President, insisted on BBC Radio yesterday that the CBI's position was one of political neutrality. Asked whether he feared an economy run by Tony Blair, the Labour leader, and Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, Sir Colin replied: "So long as the policies adopted by the Labour Party — if it were to form the next government — are not at variance with what we believe are in the interests of the country from a business and industry standpoint."

Chambers of commerce leaders say today that there will be no economic room in Britain this year for missed opportunities. Regardless of the election, 1997 will be the year for the UK to capitalise on its strong competitive position, which will be possible provided the economy remains stable and there are no "sudden" changes of policy, chambers' leaders say. Sound economic management must remain the UK's main aim.

Ian Peters, deputy director general of the British Chambers of Commerce, says today in a new year message that the election "provides the opportunity for business to set out its priorities — and for politicians to demonstrate that they are listening".

Whichever political party wins the election, the chambers say, priority must be given to education and training. Dr Peters says: "Skill shortages are already an unwelcome feature of the recovery, with all the implications they carry for wage inflation and a return to boom and bust. We cannot let this happen."

☐ Companies should make a new year resolution to tackle health problems at work, the Government's Health and Safety Commission said yesterday.

Frank Davies, HSC chairman, said: "More people are working now than for many years, but fewer people are being injured or killed in accidents at work. It is good news that workplaces have been getting safer. But what is not such good news is that workplaces do not seem to be getting healthier."

He said 2.2 million people suffer from ill-health that they believe has been caused by work, with occupational ill-health costing the economy up to £5 billion a year.

Move to revive High Court tussle with BA

By Fraser Nelson

THE High Court battle between British Airways and John Gorman, who is accusing the airline of harassment and dirty tricks, is set to resume in the new year as he mounts a fresh attempt to have the case reinstated.

Mr Gorman is to reappear in the High Court again on February 13, lodging appeal documents to reopen his action against BA, in which he is suing for damages after allegedly swallowing glass in an in-flight meal from London to New York.

The appeal comes two months after a judge dismissed his action after Mr Gorman failed to appear in court.

Mr Gorman is claiming that the airline led the court to believe that he was on holiday in Majorca at the time of the trial, and that the matter was dismissed on unfair grounds.

He intends to provide medical certificates to prove he was not on holiday, but suffering from a serious illness in a hospital in Tenerife, where he now lives for health reasons. British Airways denied the allegations, saying it had never disputed that Mr Gorman was in Tenerife.

A spokesman for BA said that if Mr Gorman succeeded in having the case reopened it would press for an urgent hearing date rather than allow a three-year delay that had held back the case so far.

This is the first of two cases that Mr Gorman is bringing against British Airways. He is also suing the airline and the Metropolitan Police for harassment and physical abuse that he claims to have suffered at the hands of both.

He said that he received a series of threatening phone calls, which he claims have since been traced to the airline's head office.

British Airways admits that calls have been made from its office to Mr Gorman's number, but says they could have been made by Mr Gorman's friends who had access to their phone network.

The action alleging harassment is not expected to start until the end of the year.

Business supports union with Europe

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

BUSINESS leaders are to give strong support for Britain's full participation in Europe. The support will come in a study of the UK's competitive business performance to be published this month by the Commission on Public Policy and British Business.

The commission, set up by the centre-left Institute for Public Policy Research, is to put forward a range of policy recommendations, including proposals on corporate tax and governance, and on the minimum wage and the European social chapter.

The findings have been outlined to the Government, Labour party and business leaders. In particular, just before Christmas, commission members met officials from the Cabinet Office's Competitiveness Unit.

The unit is currently working on a fourth competitiveness White Paper, which will be published after the election if the Conservatives are returned to government. It is significant that the unit is maintaining contacts with the commission, which though independent, is seen as having close links to Tony Blair.

In its draft report, the commission says that the growth and development of the European Union is "of central importance" to British business, with many government policies of importance to business having to be pursued at the EU level.

The commission, which includes the heads of Sainsbury's, GEC, and British Aerospace, will caution that goods and capital will move increasingly freely within the EU, and companies will be increasingly ready to locate anywhere within it on purely economic factors.

Insisting that business and government in the UK must always bear in mind the impact of policy on other European countries and Britain's relations with them, the commission will say: "We can perhaps seek to opt in or out of particular initiatives in a 'variable geometry' Europe, but we cannot escape the need to work closely with our European partners and assist them in building a new sort of political and economic union which is acceptable to all its members."

Lloyds TSB said conflict of interest was not an issue in Peter Ellwood's decision to stand down at Sears

Ellwood leaves Sears board

PETER ELLWOOD, who next month becomes group chief executive of Lloyds TSB, has resigned his directorship of Sears, the Schroders in British shop retailing group (Sarah Cunningham writes).

Mr Ellwood, who will succeed Sir Brian Pitman at Lloyds TSB, has been on the Sears board since September 1994. Sears said he is considering "a number of his outside activities" in view of his new responsibilities. He is also a director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, deputy chairman of Business in the Community and chairman of Visa International.

Last month two prominent retailers left the board of Lloyds TSB. Sir Richard Greenbury, chairman of Marks & Spencer, and John Gildersleeve, a director of Tesco, decided to leave the board because of the two retail companies' growing interest in financial services.

Sears, which has been struggling to slim down and restructure, has yet to make any serious moves into financial services and Lloyds TSB yesterday emphasised that conflict of interest was not an issue in Mr Ellwood's decision to resign from the board of Sears.

Trading in Hong Kong fund halted

By Gavin Lumsden

TRADING in the split capital Hong Kong Investment Trust was temporarily suspended yesterday as 750 shareholders voted on wind-up proposals from Jupiter International Group, the fund's manager.

Most zero-preference shareholders, representing half of the £28 million trust's assets, voted for cash, having seen their investment more than double from 20p at the fund's launch in 1991 to 43p.

However, Jupiter said that it had retained the bulk of ordinary shareholders who over the past five years have been rewarded by a near-trebling of net asset value from 24p to 60p.

Jupiter said that around 60 per cent of ordinary shareholders, holding £8.4 million, opted to invest in the Hong Kong Investment Company, a closed end Luxembourg-based fund due to be launched soon by Jupiter.

Analysts said Jupiter had found the split capital structure of Hong Kong Investment Trust too difficult to manage, particularly as it creates conflicts of interest between the different shareholders towards the end of a fund's life.

Holders of the remainder of the ordinary shares, equivalent to £5.6 million, chose to invest in the Hong Kong portion of the existing Jupiter Tyndall Global Fund.

Rossmont results offer little cheer

By Paul Durman

ROSSMONT, the maker of vandal-proof lavatories was the only quoted company to disturb the City's preparations for new year parties by issuing its trading results yesterday.

The company — market value £2.5 million — had little seasonal cheer for its shareholders. It cancelled its dividend after reporting further losses of £222,000, a little higher than last year. The loss left Rossmont with insufficient reserves to pay a dividend.

A year ago, Rossmont announced the acquisition of Dunham-Bush, a heating and air conditioning company, although the deal was not completed until the end of April. In its first two months as part of the group, Dunham-Bush incurred a small loss. However, Rossmont remains confident that Dunham-Bush will enhance its long-term prospects.

Santric, which makes the steel lavatories sited at football grounds and other public places, made a small profit, partly because of a cutback in local authority spending.

The Dunham-Bush deal has left Rossmont 14.7 per cent owned by Berjaya Group Berhad of Malaysia, with another 51 per cent held by Dunham-Bush International (Cayman), a Berjaya subsidiary.

Costain risks disruption of share-issue meeting

AZMAN SHAEIL, the new Costain chairman, faces a turbulent début at the extraordinary general meeting on Monday at which he will ask shareholders to approve the issuing of more shares (Oliver August writes).

Protesters against the Newbury bypass, which is being built by the troubled construction group, have threatened to disrupt the meeting.

At an EGM last year, protesters stormed the podium and prevented Dr Azman, formerly a joint deputy chairman, from giving a presentation.

Dr Azman is today taking over from Sir Christopher Benson, who is bowing out early after a disastrous year for Costain. Sir Christopher announced his decision to leave the company four weeks ago after the disposal of its US Coal business and its stake in London's Spitalfields development in order to raise cash and refocus the group.

Benson: group refocused

The proposal to issue more shares was announced at the same time. Shareholders approved the disposals last week.

Sir Christopher said: "Together with the new investment in the group, agreed banking through to June 1998, and the continuing support of our major shareholder, Intria, we now have the basis for the group to move forward, concentrating solely on its core engineering and construction businesses."

Control of the company now rests with three Middle Eastern companies. Intria, of Malaysia, holds 40 per cent after a £73 million bail-out last summer. Dr Azman is a director of Intria.

	Buys	Sells			
Australia $	2.21	2.05	Italy Lira	2990	2834
Austria Sch	19.43	17.98	Japan Yen	210.40	194.40
Belgium Fr	58.94	52.84	Malta	0.647	0.592
Canada $	2.417	2.257	Netherlds Gld	3.091	2.861
Cyprus Cyp£	0.825	0.770	New Zealand $	2.59	2.31
Denmark Kr	10.60	9.80	Norway Kr	11.41	10.61
Finland Mkk	8.42	7.77	Portugal Esc	276.00	258.50
France Fr	9.85	8.80	S Africa Rd	8.47	7.87
Germany Dm	2.77	2.58	Spain Pta	228.00	215.00
Greece Dr	434	409	Sweden Kr	12.25	11.48
Hong Kong $	13.59	12.68	Switzerland Fr	2.40	2.22
Iceland	120	100	Turkey Lira	188000	177000
Ireland Pt	1.08	0.98	USA $	1.746	1.656
Israel Shk	5.78	5.13	Rates for small banknotes as supplied by Barclays. Different rates for traveller's cheques.		

THE TIMES

WILL PUBLISH A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT ON STAMP COLLECTING IN ASSOCIATION WITH ROYAL MAIL ON TUESDAY 7TH JANUARY 1997

Answers from page 29

CHAMPART

(a) The division of the produce of land. Hence, a form of tenure or lease, in which the landlord receives a fixed share of the produce. Also, a charge upon land, consisting of a part of the produce. Still in use in the Channel Islands. "The land was subject to both tithe and champart — the latter being a payment of every twelfth sheaf of corn."

COWAN

(c) One who builds dry stone walls (ie without mortar); a dry-stone-diker; applied derogatorily to one who does the work of a mason, but has not been regularly apprenticed or bred to the trade. Derivation unknown. "He was by trade a cowan, that is an occupation combining the callings of a mason and house carpenter in one."

CLASTIC

(c) In geology, consisting of broken pieces of older rocks. Of an anatomy model, composed of a number of separable pieces. From the Greek *klidein* to break (off).

CONIROSTER

(b) A member of the *Conirostres*, a group of insessorial birds having a conical bill. From the Latin *cōnus* a cone + *rostrum* a bill or beak. An 1824 dictionary of science: "Conirosters. Conirostres, including those which have a thick robust conical beak, as the crows and finches."

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Cheque Book Holder: full length pocket and cheque book holder slot, a credit card pocket, and a drivers licence pocket. 212 x 94 x 10mm.

Credit Card Holder: six internal credit card slots and two concealed pockets. 118 x 75 x 8mm.

Business Card Holder: pocket for supply of business cards, two credit card slots, and internal lid pocket. 103 x 88 x 16mm.

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THE TIMES

CITY DIARY

Montague to pack his bags

AN INAUSPICIOUS start to the new year for Robert Montague, the tycoon who was forced to quit two years ago as chief executive of Tiphook, the container leasing firm, after amassing personal debts of £30 million.

When Montague fell on hard times, the loyal Tory supporter set up a tenancy over his picturesque estate so that it could be sold only with him in occupation. Now it appears a deal has been struck between him and the receivers of his 1,300-acre estate in Oxfordshire, enabling a sale with vacant possession to go ahead. Expected to go for around £8.5 million, it is due to be marketed this month through Knight Frank and Strutt & Parker.

Fedded bliss

CONGRATULATIONS to Alan Greenspan's long-term girlfriend who unwrapped the ultimate present on Christmas Day — a marriage proposal. After 12 years of dating, the chairman of the Federal Reserve popped the question to NBC-TV correspondent Andrea Mitchell: "Do you want a big wedding or a small wedding?" According to 70-year-old Greenspan: "We have a huge amount in common. It's a really great match." Both he and Mitchell, who is 20 years his junior, were married previously.

Missing mobiles

THIEVES in Hong Kong rang in the new year by running away with 40 containers of mobile phones. The crooks made off with around $1.27 million worth of equipment. What fun tracking down the stolen goods in an area where almost one in six people has a mobile phone.

"And a record high new year to you too"

Hot gossip

STILL on the mobile, a Brazilian policeman suffered third degree burns when the cellular phone attached to his belt exploded. Military police colonel Malcir Ferreira da Costa has a very sore hip and leg as a result of the accident, but counts himself lucky that he didn't have the phone pinned to his ear at the time.

Down on the farm

WITH the pick of trophy hotels at his diposal, where did Gerry Robinson choose to spend New Year's Eve? The multimillionaire chairman of Granada Group plumped for his converted farmhouse in Ireland, surrounded by the rest of the Robinson clan. The tenth of 11 children, Robinson headed straight for his homeland in Donegal (where he intends to retire in seven years' time) to see in the new year with his merry band of friends and relatives. Betty Robinson, Gerry's 87-year-old mother, and his two young children from his second marriage were also there. Let's hope snow didn't prevent him from returning to his favourite golf course.

SOME 38 years after the so-called Great Leap Forward to become the world's biggest steelmaker, China has reached its goal. Its steel production has broken the 100 million tonne mark, making it the number one steelmaker in the world. China's dreams turned into a nightmare in 1958, when farmers abandoned their fields to make steel at Mao Zedong's behest. The campaign was abandoned a year later after harvests failed and millions of people died of starvation.

MORAG PRESTON

Million smiles for the software supernerds

Fraser Nelson checks out the upcoming generation of high-tech whiz-kids

They were laughed out of the classroom as schoolkids. Their parents despaired as they locked themselves in their rooms with ZX81s as teenagers. But the nerds who shunned society for their floppies in the Eighties are now enjoying the last laugh as the software millionaires of today.

They are a breed apart from their peers in the more established sectors. In their world the value of a company is remotely connected to matters such as assets, profits and earnings. Their currency is intellectual property, usually borne from one home computer, unusual amounts of enthusiasm and years of Sunday afternoons in their bedrooms. Just one good program can make them for life.

This is excatly what happened to Peter Molyneux, now one of the biggest names in British computer games. Eight years ago, he was living on a diet of lentils and potatoes in the top flat of a pensioner's house in Guildford.

In 1989, he wrote *Populous*, a complex software game whose players can contruct a fantasy world as well as zap aliens. It sold more than three million copies. And now Mr Molyneux is worth more than £30 million.

His success sent a message to fund managers across the City — software companies are a second chance to climb on board the computer miracle that shot Bill Gates of Microsoft to stardom.

Mesmerised by the profits to assets ratio of software firms, the City is willing, wanting and waiting to make millionaires out of anyone ready to take their wares to the market.

Michael Hodges, chairman of On-Line plc, took up the invitation last month, becoming a paper millionaire at the age of 34. His company runs only ten computer games, but it was valued at £4 million when it joined the Alternative Investment Market last month.

Most software leaders have yet to go public. They could take their companies to the City tomorrow and be rewarded with a wonder-rating that would instantly make them worth millionaires. But the City's asking price is still on the rise, and most are opting for the status of millionaire-in-waiting.

Jez San, a 30-year-old former computer programmer, joined the ranks of the software millionaires in March when his company, Argonought Software, was valued at £60 million after a bid from Logic, the American software giant.

Peter Molyneux is now one of the biggest names in British computer games

Michael Hodges, left, became a paper millionaire at 34 and Jan Murray netted £1.7 million

Mr San, who founded the company in his bedroom when he was 16, struck gold when he created StarWing, which became a best-selling game for Nintendo. He brought his father out of retirement to be the company's finance director and now employs 110 staff in Colindale, north London.

Messrs Molyneux, Hodges and San are all in their thirties and picked up their skills during the Eighties when BBC Micros, ZX Spectrums and Amstrads reigned supreme.

Theirs was a decade where the craze for computers was synonymous with a craze for programming, and it was impossible to use any home computer without at least a basic knowledge of its language. It was the decade of the nerd: teenagers sat in their rooms writing better and better programs.

The leap from the bedroom to the boardroom comes instantly, and needs hardly any business sense at all — just great computer games. This window has now closed forever. The 12-year-olds who pulled computers from their boxes at Christmas are unlikely to ever encounter a line of programming.

Home computers now run on the point-and-click technology of the mouse, which has rendered amateur programming all but extinct. As computers move on, so too does the breed of software millionaire.

> Computer firms have now won the battle for the City's imagination

The likes of Bill Gates and Apple Macintosh's Steve Jobs made their millions on the rise of the personal computer, and the basic operating software that goes with it. The games-masters are the second breed, developing ingenious add-ons and now cashing in from the battles between Nintendo and Sega.

And a third wave of millionaires is being brought to riches courtesy of the information superhighway. As anyone who has attempted to search for any topic on the Internet will know, the World Wide Web is dominated by thousands of teenage "Netheads" who have developed their personal Internet pages.

These offer a virtual tour of their likes and loves and offer the option of downloading pictures of their dog.

Just as the software tycoons of today spent their youth trying to crack into the machine code of *Horace Goes Skiing*, Netheads are cutting their teeth on the Web pages, and have already started to rake in the millions as a reward.

Ajaz Ahmed, is leading the pack of the next generation of software millionaires. He set up AKQA, an Internet consultancy that advises companies how to make the World Wide Web work for them. He says that the company turns over well north of £2 million a year and he plans to float it within three years.

At 42, Cliff Stanford is something of a father figure for Britain's Internet wannabes. As managing director of Demon Internet, which connects more UK computers to the Internet than any other firm, he is worth about £18 million.

He set up Demon as a software company in 1985, and four years ago branched into what was then the enthusiasts' domain of Internet. When surfing the Net became trendy and the popularity exploded, Mr Stanford cashed in on amateurs' demand by offering Internet access for £10 a month.

But unlike the games-masters, Internet millionaires must combine technical ingenuity with sharp business acumen to make the leap from bedroom to boardroom. The key is not so much in technical know-how, which is, after all, available from most nerdy teenagers in America.

Money is made from selling the Internet as a commodity, through helping technophobes to harness the Web. Those who can sell the Internet and know their way round a home page can become serial software millionaires.

Grahame Davies, a former director of Demon who made almost £1 million from the company, left it last year to help to set up another Internet access provider as a head-on competitor. The result was Easynet, now the third largest Internet-access provider in Britain and already worth £8.6 million.

Then came Jan Murray, founder of PC World, who pocketed £1.7 million when he sold the nationwide computer chain to Dixons three years ago. With the help of four of the original PC World team, they set up Internet Technology — a rival to both Demon and Easynet.

In a little over a year, the firm has shot from a standing start to take fourth place in the Internet connection stakes and challenge Easynet. As the largest single shareholder, Mr Murray now holds a second paper fortune worth £5.35 million. As the company closes in on Easynet, the value of his stake could well double over the next year.

Computer companies have now won the battle for the City's imagination, and London is now beginning to emulate New York in its excitement for the home-grown commodity now being dubbed "Britsoft".

Profits no longer essential, computer companies coming to the market are being valued at up to 100 times their last annual sales.

The founders of even small software companies are claiming shareholdings that make them instant millionaires. For the whiz-kids of yesteryear, their ship has most certainly come in.

Dublin is winning back 1980s emigrants, says **Eileen McCabe**

UK retailers queue to join Irish high life

Like bees to honey, ever more of Britain's blue chip retailers came to Dublin in 1996. Boots, Debenhams, Dixons, Iceland and Argos all established base camps, and Marks & Spencer moved into one of the city's most prestigious buildings.

Dublin is a booming city in a booming economy — the fastest-growing economy in the OECD fuelling one of the fastest-growing capital cities in Europe. According to the 1996 report by ERECO, a group of European economic research institutes, Dublin will hold this title until at least 2000.

The city is more confident than ever before. With Irish inflation in 1996 running at 1.8 per cent, house prices rose in Dublin by 15 per cent. In the leafiest, most exclusive, suburbs, values rose by 30 per cent.

When domestic property specialists started to predict that 1997 would bring more of the same, Ruairi Quinn, the Finance Minister, began to worry. Property prices were rising so fast that they could affect the overall inflation figures, he believed, and something had to be done to dampen spirits.

In December, he increased the surtax payable by house buyers from 5 per cent to 9 per cent on houses valued at Ir£150,000 and over.

The prosperity in Dublin is exciting companies such as Debenhams and Argos

The commercial property sector, another weathervane of economists, is also soaring. Retail, industrial and office space all gave investment returns in 1996 of 16 per cent or more, against about 7 per cent in Britain.

By autumn, Dublin had an extra million square feet of retail space, as developers and builders got into the act. City centre and out-of-town shopping malls popped up, with British retail giants as anchor tenants. And still, business analysts predict, there is room for expansion.

Not everyone who is buying is Irish. According to the specialists, Dublin is Europe's second most popular tourist destination, after Amsterdam. In 1996, four million visitors visited the Irish Republic, most of them spending time, and money, in its capital.

This trend is set to continue, especially if the peace process can be reassembled in 1997. In November, Ireland's two tourism boards launched a joint initiative to attract visitors to both parts of the island.

Tourism already generates Ir£1.3 billion a year from overseas visitors. The tourism industry is growing at a rate of 15 per cent, against a European average of 2 per cent.

Such is the demand for accommodation that there are 25 hotels being built or in the planning process. They will add 3,000 bedrooms.

The thorn in the foot of the Celtic tiger has always been its dismal unemployment rate. In spite of the creation of up to 40,000 new jobs a year and the relentless effort by successive governments to massage the figure down through training schemes, the core rate remains a stubbornly high 12 per cent.

Part of the reason lies in an ironic and peculiarly Irish twist. Many of the thousands of educated young people who emigrated in the 1980s are coming home, their CVs laden with experience and know-how, and swooping on the new jobs. This does not bother the retailers. What they see is a permanent, employed population that is rapidly becoming used to the high life. And that is where they come in.

Between the Christmas rush and the end of the January sales, consumers in the Republic will have spent Ir£1.6 billion, Dublin Chamber of Commerce estimates. In Dublin, the figure may reach Ir£600,000. The big British retailers are making sure that they are getting their share.

The lowering of the guard

Face the Facts. *Radio 4, 7.20pm.*

A new season of the series that must be anathema to crooks opens with a worrying report on drug smuggling. Seizures of supplies by customs officers are breaking records, but so are the amounts of drugs that are coming into the country. Cuts in the number of customs officers are only part of the problem, albeit a big part. In vulnerable areas such as the south Cornwall coastlines, intelligence collating and flexible teams are taking over from the strategically positioned officers of old. This all looks good on paper, but the anti-smuggling experts to whom John Waite talks indicate that the results are proving no more successful than the experiment of using mobile units to replace the bobby on the beat.

Bell, Book and Candle. *Radio 4, 2.00pm.*

By directing it as well, Ned Chaillet has reduced the risk of his adaptation of John Van Druten's stage comedy about witchcraft going off the boil. It might otherwise have sounded dated, even a trifle silly. It was already beginning to go down that path when it was filmed in the 1950s, with Kim Novak as the landlady who uses her magical powers to ensnare her unsuspecting tenant (James Stewart). In Chaillet's intelligently disciplined production, spellbinder and spellbound are delightfully played by Beatie Edney and Stephen Moore. The witch's familiar, a cat called Pyewacket, is honoured by clever pussy-cat music from Mia Soteriou. Peter Davallle

RADIO 1

8.00am Charlie Jordan **10.00** Radio 1's Top 100 Hits **6.00pm** Steve Lamacq's Hits for '97 **8.00** Staying Out for the Summer, with Mark Radcliffe. Highlights from some of the festivals of 1996 **11.00** In Concert: Orbital. Highlights of the performance at Alexandra Palace in London **12.00** Mary Anne Hobbs **4.00am** Charlie Jordan

RADIO 2

6.00am Nick Barraclough **8.05** Sarah Kennedy **10.00** Alex Lester **1.00pm** Christmas Comedy Classics **1.30** The Beatles at the BBC (2/2) **2.30** Ed Stewart **5.05** John Dunn **7.00** Evita: Make or Break Paul Gambaccini investigates the film musical genre **8.00** Love on the Moors — from Heathcliff to Heath-Cliff. The story of the classic *Wuthering Heights* **9.30** Carlo Curley: Pavarotti of the Organ **10.30** Vintage Christmas: The Palace **11.00** Bob Harris **1.00am** Adrian Finighan **3.00** Steve Madden

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.05am Vital Statistics **5.35** Lawrence Bailey: 20th-Century Victorian **6.00** The Breakfast Programme **8.35** The Magazine **11.35** Dirty News Special **12.00** Midday with Mair **2.05pm** Sport on Five. Football; cricket: Second One-Day International between Zimbabwe and England in Harare **5.30** Trevor Brooking's Football Night. Includes **5.45** Everton v Blackburn and **8.00** Manchester United v Aston Villa (0) **10.05** The Food of Love and Hate **11.00** Night Extra **11.35** Never Walk Alone (3/5) **12.05am** After Hours **2.05** Up All Night

TALK RADIO

5.00am Early Breakfast **7.00** Paul Ross **9.00** Scott Chisholm **12.00** **2.00pm** Tommy Boyd **4.00** Drivetime, with Peter Deeley **7.00** Mizz Dee's Sportszone **10.00** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

WORLD SERVICE

All times in GMT. News on the hour. **5.30am** Europe Today **6.30** Europe Today **7.15** Off the Shelf **7.30** Discovery **8.10** Words of Faith **8.15** Concert Hall **9.05** World Business Report **9.15** Andy Kershaw **9.45** Sports Roundup **10.30** BBC English **10.45** Off the Shelf **11.30** Thirty-Minute Drama **12.05pm** World Business Report **12.15** Britain Today **12.30** Composer of the Month **2.05** Outlook **2.30** Megamix **3.05** Sports Roundup **3.15** Concert Hall **4.15** World Today **4.30** BBC English **4.45** Britain Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Roundup **6.30** Discovery **7.01** Outlook **7.25** Words of Faith **7.30** Multitrack **8.05** World Business Report **9.15** Britain Today **9.30** Meridian On Screen **10.30** World Today **10.45** Sports Roundup **11.10** Science View **11.15** Country Style **11.30** Multitrack **12.30am** From Our Own Correspondent **12.45** Britain Today **1.30** Outlook **1.55** Words of Faith **2.30** Assignment **3.15** Sports Roundup **3.30** Meridian Books **4.30** Europe Today

CLASSIC FM

4.00am Mark Griffiths **6.00** Sally Peterson **9.00** Henry Kelly **12.00** Mike Read **2.00pm** The Royal Opera — 50 Glorious Years. A selection of highlights from the last half-century **4.00** Nick Bailey **6.00** Newsnight **7.00** Gardening Forum (r) **8.00** Evening Concert. Liszt (Les Preludes); Nielsen (Clarinet Concerto); Rimsky-Korsakov (Capriccio Espagnol, Op 34); Beethoven (Symphony No 7 in A, Op 92) **10.00** Quentin Howard's Six of the Best **1.00am** Mel Cooper

VIRGIN RADIO

6.00am Jeremy Clark **10.00** The Best of Russ 'n' Jono 1996. A look back at the year with the award-winning duo **2.00pm** Nicky Horne **6.00** Paul Coyte (FM) / Richard Porter (AM) **10.00** Mark Forrest **2.00am** Randal Lee Rose

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, with Penny Gore. Mozart, air Wendt (Le Nozze di Figaro, excerpts); Czerny (Ouverture Caracteristique et Brillante); Michael Haydn (Symphony in C, P31); Lilburn (Drysdale Overture); Chopin (Two Nocturnes, Op 62); Rimsky-Korsakov (Sinfonietta on Russian Themes)
9.00 Morning Collection, with Catriona Young. Includes Zavateri (Violin Concerto in C, Op 1 No 3); Purcell (Frost scene, King Arthur); Tchaikovsky (Symphony No 3 in D, Polish)
10.15 New Year's Day Concert. Live from the Golden Hall of the Vienna Musikverein. The Vienna Philharmonic, under Riccardo Muti. A traditional concert of music by the Strauss family and friends
10.50 The Linz Version **11.15** Concert, part 2
12.35pm Hopes and Resolutions. Music from the Renaissance to celebrate the New Year. Includes John Dowland (Resolution for Lute); William Byrd (O God, that Guides the Cheerful Sun)
1.00 Composer of the Week: Leonard Bernstein
2.00 Midweek Choice. Includes Bach (Goldberg Variations, BWV988, excerpts); Mozart (Serenade In G, K525 (Eine kleine Nachtmusik); Burgon (Nunc Dimittis); Dvorak (Songs My Mother Taught Me)
4.00 Choral Evensong. A service to mark the life and work of Dr Bernard Rose who died last November, recorded in the Chapel of Magdalen College, Oxford, where Dr Rose was fellow, organist and informator choristarum from 1957 to 1981. Choir of Magdalen College Oxford, informator choristarum Grayston Ives, organ scholar Matthew Martin
5.00 Music Machine, with Sue Nelson
5.15 Interpretations on Record: The vocal music of Handel. Includes performances by Isobel Baillie, Heddle Nash, Jennifer Vyvyan, Maureen Lehane, Joan Sutherland, John Shirley-Quirk, Janet Baker, James Bowman and Emma Kirkby (r)
6.30 Private Passions. Michael Berkeley meets actress Patricia Routledge
7.30 A Grand, Mysterious Harmony. The last in a series exploring the symphonic legacy of Anton Bruckner a century after his death. Symphony No 9 in D minor. BBC National Orchestra of Wales, under Tadaaki Otaka
9.30 Said Short Stories: In Mrs Packletide's Tiger. Read by Peter Howell (r)
9.35 Coull Quartet. Shostakovich (String Quartet No 11, Op 122)
10.00 Voices. Iain Burnside invites listeners to pick their favourite songs and singers from 1996
10.45 The Shellac Show. Includes works by Brahms, Auber and Jean Francaix, and performances by Olga Haley, Paderewski and Alexander Kipnis
11.30 Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky (r)
12.30am Jazz Notes, with Digby Fairweather
1.00 Through the Night.

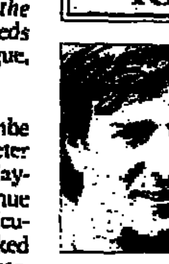
RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping (LW) 6.00 News **6.10** Farming **6.25** Prayer **6.30** The Living World **7.00** Today **8.43** Below the Parapet
9.00 News 9.05 Midweek, with *Times* columnist Libby Purves and guests
10.00 A Good Read (FM), Sarah Dunant invites David Mellor and Jenny Eclair to choose their favourite paperbacks
10.00 Daily Service (LW)
10.15 On This Day (LW)
10.30 Woman's Hour, with Jenni Murray
11.30 The Old Curiosity Shop. Elizabeth Proud's adaptation of Charles Dickens's classic (6/6)
12.00 Paid Company, with Anna Perry
12.25pm King Street Junior, with Karl Howman and James Grout **12.55** Weather
1.00 The World at One
1.40 The Archers (r)
2.00 Bell, Book and Candle. See Choice
3.30 Carry on up the Shrubbery. Harry Thompson traces the rise of alternative beliefs in the 1930s, revealing why more than half a million people took to nudism (r)
4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope Quiz. Paul Gambaccini quizzes two teams on the year's cultural highs and lows
4.45 Short Story: New Year's Day. Fay Weldon reads her own story about a couple's faltering relationship
5.00 PM 5.50 Shipping **5.55** Weather
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.15 Going South. Kevin Connolly reports on the annual influx of travellers to Marseilles (r)
6.30 Quote Unquote, with Nigel Rees, Stanley Unwin, Lee Simpson, Martin Holland and Christopher Matthew (r)
7.00 News 7.05 The Archers
7.20 Face the Facts. See Choice
7.45 Golden Spoons. With Bill and Katherine Barlow, Bridie Moore and Rhona Norley
8.30 Close Shaves. A look at the age-old male shaving ritual, including an examination of the current fad of the complete head shave
9.00 Eureka. In the first of a new series Dr Oliver Sacks talks to Barbara Myers about the intricacies and oddities of the human mind
9.30 Kaleidoscope Quiz (r)
10.00 The World Tonight
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Scarlet and Black. Part three of Stendhal's novel, read by Greg Wise
11.00 The Cheese Shop Presents. A new offbeat comedy series, including a tortoise-racing professor and a radio gardener who specialises in burning roses. With the voices of Gerard Foster, Dave Lamb and Gordon Southern
11.30 Date with Fate. A stroke of outrageous luck gives a film buff the chance to become a movie mogul. Phil Whelans and Gary Parker's story, with Michael Troughton, Jenny Howe and Toby Longworth (r)
11.45 The Joys of Yiddish, with Michael Fenton Stevens (r)
12.00 News 12.30am The Late Book: Alice Through the Looking Glass, by Lewis Carroll (r) (3/7)
12.48 Shipping Forecast
1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

Out with the in-jokes, let's have some new

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

New year, same old dilemmas. Am I generous with my praise of Cuts (ITV), *pour encourager les autres* single plays? Or am I honest, thereby hastening the day when ITV's drama output consists wholly of alternating episodes of *Peak Practice* and *Soldier, Soldier*? Not easy, is it?

Honesty, however, it will have to be. In which case: *Cuts* was derivative, too long and apparently designed only to appeal to an audience of television executives. There was a running joke in it about the Edinburgh Television Festival. "I believe in quality/writers/whatever," Lord Mellow (Timothy West) would shout from time to time: "I said so at the Edinburgh Festival, so I'm stuck with it." If the idea of adapting Malcolm Bradbury's comic novella was also dreamt up at the Edinburgh Festival, I wouldn't be the slightest bit surprised. All sorts of things sound like good ideas late at night in the bar of The George Hotel.

The story of *Cuts*, adapted here by David Nobbs, was basically a modest reworking of Evelyn Waugh's *Scoop*. Instead of William Boot becoming a war correspondent through mistaken identity, we had Henry Babbacombe (Peter Davison) plucked from rural obscurity to write television drama because his improbably glamorous literary agent was willing to go to bed with Jocelyn Pride (Nigel Planer), head of drama at Eldorado Television. And if you think that name made them wince at the BBC wait till you hear the title of the series that Eldorado had just cancelled — *Gladstone: Man of Empire*. Ring any bells?

Boot, you will recall, wrote the nature notes for Lord Copper's *Beast*. Babbacombe, by modest contrast, had written the definitive work, *Dithyrambic Pentameters* and two novels about garden sheds. The man was clearly a fraud — everybody knows that *the comic novel about garden sheds* was written by my colleague, Lynne Truss.

Fraud or not, Babbacombe was easy meat for Peter Davison, who has been playing this sort of engaging ingenue for most of his career. In particular, Babbacombe bore a marked resemblance to Dr Stephen Daker, the idealistic young doctor that Davison portrayed in Andrew Davies's outstanding campus comedy, *A Very Peculiar Practice*. Like Daker, Babbacombe was quickly seduced by a deliciously powerful woman (in this case Pippa Haywood) and like Daker, he worked for a university ever more tightly bound to the world of big business.

The faculty of theme park administration, however, was quite enough of university jokes. Back to television. As Babbacombe got down to the writing, we had old jokes about kiwi-fruit, timeless jokes about buzz words ("we want it realistic, artistic, visual and . . . luminous") and in-jokes about executive producers ("someone who doesn't do very much but gets a separate screen credit on which the camera lingers"). Perhaps the best joke of all was Babbacombe's discovery that the rewrites were being done before he delivered his script — to save time.

There were other bright moments, most of which involved West, who was on superb form as Mellow, the television tycoon who ardently believed in quality, as long as it was cheap. Goodness, this was subtle stuff.

Bradbury wrote his novella based on his experience of working in television and Andrew Wallace apparently wrote **Burn Your Phone** (BBC2) based on his experience as a telephone operator. It must have been a very odd experience.

Many short plays — and particularly those that purport to be thrillers — suffer from an adolescent quality, forced upon them by the need first to generate dramatic tension and then to resolve it in under half an hour. So it rather proved with this, with the revelation that the menacing phone calls that Andy (Alan Cumming, who also directed) had been receiving at the telephone exchange were not the first sign of mental illness but a psychometric test designed by his employer, being the dramatic equivalent of "and then I woke up". Was that it? It was.

Still, not much damage done. Before he got carried away with melodrama, Wallace had shown a good ear for . . . well, monologue in this case and Cumming, while hardly having to stretch himself in what was a one-man show, emerged as proficient behind the camera as he is in front.

As somebody who took an instant dislike to *Kes* at an early age, I was not looking forward to **Shadow — the Peregrine** (BBC2). But it could have been worse. I could have been a pigeon.

Feral pigeons, racing pigeons, even doves, I'm afraid to say, died a dozen feathery deaths as we followed the "story" of Shadow, a female peregrine who lived in a quarry with a curiously nameless mate and reared a single chick, Storm. Storm could have had brothers and sisters but one egg was infertile and her mother clumsily kicked another out of the nest when she went off for lunch. Aah — anthropomorphism, don't you just hate it?

Simon King's photography, however, was as splendid as ever. Although one or two sequences looked as if they might have involved the co-operation of a trained peregrine, the nature-red-in-tooth-and-talon stuff was magnificent. Behind you, behind you, we shouted, but would those pigeons listen? "Shadow had claimed her natural right," pronounced John King's narration as yet another bundle of feathers flapped their last. I expect the pigeons would like a right of reply on that one.

BBC1

7.00am JOE 90 (8467623) **7.25** Playdays (7808739) **7.45** Postman Pat (7092791) **8.00** Peter Pan and the Pirates (8665555) **8.20** Bodger and Badger (3402352) **8.35** The Legend of Prince Valiant (3910265) **9.00** Incredible Games (8211791) **9.25** Sweet Valley High (8230826) **9.50** Record Breakers Gold (2689807) **10.15** Blue Peter Magic (732536)

10.45 FILM: Bigfoot and the Hendersons (1987) with John Lithgow, Melinda Dillon and Don Ameche. A family's camping holiday is brought to an abrupt end when they encounter the legendary Bigfoot. Directed by William Dear (T) (12370401)

12.30pm WIPEOUT (49826)

1.00 NEWS (T) and weather (71686062)

1.08 REGIONAL NEWS (96778772)

1.10 NEIGHBOURS (T) (80660401)

1.30 THE WORLD OF PETER RABBIT AND FRIENDS (T) (48197)

2.00 FILM: Porridge (1979) Spin-off from the 1970s television series starring Ronnie Barker, Richard Beckinsale and Fulton Mackay. Directed by Dick Clement (T) (77420)

3.30 GLOBAL SUNRISE Cameras capture the rising of the sun from 20 different locations throughout the world, through six continents and every time zone (T) (6109333)

4.50 FINAL SCORE (1947710)

5.10 NEWS (T) and weather (7431277)

5.20 REGIONAL NEWS (9647130)

5.25 TOM AND JERRY (r) (1823517)

5.45 NEIGHBOURS (r) (T) (852420)

6.10 FILM: ET The Extra-Terrestrial (1982) starring Henry Thomas, Drew Barrymore, Dee Wallace and Peter Coyote. Spielberg's sci-fi fantasy which became one of the most successful films ever made, about a boy who befriends an endearing alien (T) (86999642)

8.00 RONNIE BARKER: A LIFE IN COMEDY Ronnie Barker gives his first interview since retiring from showbusiness, chronicling his early career in the prison sitcom *Porridge*, his performances alongside Ronnie Corbett to his comic portrayal of the penny-pinching Arkwright in *Open All Hours*. Ronnie Corbett, David Jason, Nicholas Lyndhurst, Michael Palin and Richard Briers are among those paying tribute (T) (162389)

8.40 NEWS (T) and weather (226771)

9.00 THE MILL ON THE FLOSS Period drama based on the novel by George Eliot, charting the life of a woman forced to choose between the men in her life. Starring Emily Watson, James Frayn, Bernard Hill and Peter Gunn (T) (18593802)

11.05 MATCH OF THE DAY Highlights of Manchester United's game against Aston Villa at Old Trafford (T) (978420)

12.10am FILM: Big Jake (1971) starring John Wayne as an ageing Texas rancher who rides to the rescue when his former wife asks him to help to find their grandson, who has been kidnapped, with Richard Boone, Chris Mitchum, Patrick Wayne and Maureen O'Hara, in her fifth and final movie with the Duke (134591)

1.55 WEATHER (2815840)

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BBC2

7.30 FILM: Blockade (1938, b/w) Henry Fonda as a farmer fighting for his rights during the Spanish Civil War. Also starring Madeleine Carroll, Leo Carrillo and John Halliday. Directed by William Dieterle (T) (5992604)

8.50 FONDA ON FONDA Jane Fonda hosts a tribute to her father, Henry (r) (2093333)

9.40 FILM: My Darling Clementine (1946, b/w) Classic John Ford western starring Henry Fonda as Wyatt Earp (T) (22538401)

11.15 NEW YEAR'S DAY CONCERT FROM VIENNA Riccardo Muti conducts the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra as they perform polkas, waltzes and marches by the Strauss family. Also included in the programme is an appearance by the Vienna State Opera Ballet. Simultaneous broadcast with Radio 3 (6087468)

12.30pm THE ROYAL INSTITUTION CHRISTMAS LECTURES In his final lecture Professor Conway Morris traces human evolution (T) (33894)

1.30 OLYMPIC GYMNASTICS Highlights from Atlanta (34623)

2.30 BALANCHINE: New York City Ballet Salutes George Balanchine Celebrating the tenth anniversary of the choreographer's death with excerpts from *Who Cares*, *Apollo* and *Western Symphony* (4902913)

3.55 FILM: Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory (1971) Based on Roald Dahl's classic children's story. Gene Wilder as the eccentric confectioner who takes a group of youngsters and their guardians on a tour of his phenomenal factory. Directed by Mel Stuart (T) (636178)

5.30 SKI SUNDAY SPECIAL (983536)

6.10 IN THE EYE OF THE WIND David Attenborough pays tribute to Sir Peter Scott, founder of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (r) (626739)

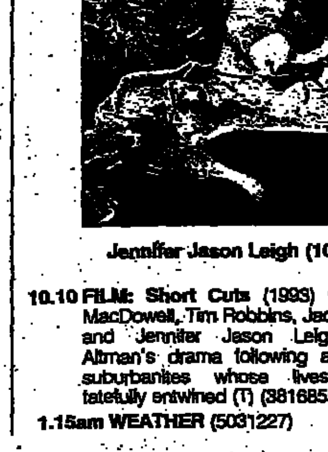
7.00 WAITING FOR GOD Diana and Tom organise a nativity play (r) (T) (2333)

7.30 UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE INTERNATIONAL Imperial College London v the University of Michigan (T) (5)

8.00 THE TRAVEL SHOW CARIBBEAN SPECIAL Puerto Rico, Dominica and Antigua (467771)

8.40 SHOOTING STARS with guests Clive Mantle, Neil Morrissey, Anna Friel and Alvin Stardust (r) (T) (107420)

9.20 THE TONY FERRINO PHENOMENON Musical fun with Steve Coogan and his Portuguese alter-ego, crooner Tony Ferrino (T) (989523)



Jennifer Jason Leigh (10.10pm)

10.10 FILM: Short Cuts (1993) with Andie MacDowell, Tim Robbins, Jack Lemmon and Jennifer Jason Leigh. Robert Altman's drama following a group of suburbanites whose lives become fatefully entwined (T) (38168555)

1.15am WEATHER (5031227)

CHOICE

Global Sunrise: Around the World in 80 Minutes
BBC1, 3.30pm

Never underestimate the ingenuity of the people who make wildlife documentaries. Just when you thought that the genre could not possibly offer any new angles there comes a project of striking originality. As 1995 turned into 1996 camera crews from the BBC Natural History Unit were in position in 20 locations on six continents to film landscapes and wildlife as dawn approached. The beauty of the idea is that although we are seeing the results as another new year arrives, the material has hardly dated. With Julian Pettifer as anchor man, and experts on the spot, the cameras capture gannets in New Zealand, a giant turtle laying its eggs on a Queensland beach, geese flocking to East Anglia and other vignettes of the natural world and its rituals.

The Mill on the Floss
BBC1, 9.00pm

It is strange how George Eliot's novels have become a feature of the television new year, for they hardly burst with good cheer and certainly not *The Mill on the Floss* with its bleak story of unrequited love. This is an observation, not a complaint. Eliot's naturalism is well suited to the screen and Hugh Stoddart's adaptation, helped by camerawork that is rich but never just pretty, adroitly captures the social and geographical milieu in which the story is set. Emily Watson, who achieved sudden fame last year with the cinema film *Breaking the Waves*, plays the pivotal role of Maggie Tulliver, the young woman torn between her love for two suitors while trying to maintain loyalty to her ill-starred family. Ifan Meredith makes a promising debut as Maggie's brother, Tom, whose love-hate relationship with his sister burns through the narrative.

Klinik!
Channel 4, 10.15pm

Have you heard that Diana, Princess of Wales, is going to a clinic in Holland for IVF treatment so that she can have another baby? No, this is not some tabloid exposé but the central joke of a snappy little series based on the revoicing of film footage. Previously employed on *Pallas*, a spoof about the Royal Family, the stratagem is now applied to a Dutch soap opera interspersed with film of the Princess. The plot has the clinic taken over by a Dr Werther, who looks and sounds not unlike Richard Wilson's Victor Meldrew. His plan is to kill off his Dutch patients and import more lucrative customers from the British National Health Service. Which is where the Princess comes in, though surely she does not use the NHS? *Klinik!* is a small but jolly effort, just about worth its ten-minute slots.

Cows
Channel 4, 10.25pm

The Johnson family, Mum, Dad and three children, are played by such recognisable faces as Pam Ferris, James Fleet and Nicola Walker (seen recently in *Moll Flanders*). Or the faces would be recognisable if they were not covered with animal masks, for the Johnsons, though they live and talk like human beings, and mix with them socially, are cows. It is a bold concept for a sitcom, and even bolder for the writers, Nick Whitby and the comedian Eddie Izzard, to launch the Johnsons in a one-hour special prior to the series. Despite vulgarities which seem inseparable from television comedy these days, the joke is adroitly sustained, helped by Patrick Barlow as a dotty bovine great-aunt with a voice like Dame Edith Evans and a plot about the older son getting married to his human girlfriend. **Peter Waymark**

HTV

6.00 GMTV (1184081)

9.25 SANTO BUGITO (8225994)

9.50 CARTOON TIME (2683623)

10.10 FILM: A Man For All Seasons (1966) Oscar-winning adaptation of Robert Bolt's play about the clash between Henry VIII and Thomas More over the King's divorce. With Paul Scofield and Robert Shaw (50731994)

12.30 NEWS (T) and weather (25326449)

12.45 THE MAKING OF JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH (r) (936046)

1.15 FILM: Silverado (1985) with Kevin Kline, Kevin Costner and Danny Glover. Western adventure about a mismatched quartet teaming up to save a run-down town (49001710)

3.40 FILM: Straight Talk (1992) Romantic comedy, starring Dolly Parton. A naive country girl arrives in Chicago and is mistaken for a well-known radio agony aunt (350246)

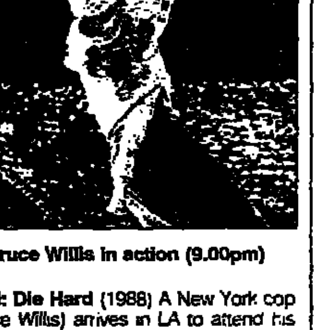
5.20 NEWS (T) and weather (6234771)

5.35 FILM: Feds (1988) Two female recruits to the FBI training programme join forces to outwit their chauvinistic classmates. Starring Rebecca De Mornay and Mary Gross. Directed by Dan Goldberg (T) (1634791)

7.00 EMMERDALE (T) (6159)

7.30 CORONATION STREET A whole host of surprises lay in store for Maxine and Maureen. Mike and Alma's preparations for their big dinner party look like being in vain (T) (81)

8.00 DES O'CONNOR TONIGHT With guests Barbra Streisand, Damage, Jimeoin and Ken Dodd (T) (6802)



Bruce Willis in action (9.00pm)

9.00 FILM: Die Hard (1988) A New York cop (Bruce Willis) arrives in LA to attend his estranged wife's party, but he finds himself caught in a deadly game of cat-and-mouse against Alan Rickman and his gang of highly efficient terrorists. Also starring Bonnie Bedelia. Directed by John McTiernan (T) (66331555)

11.25 NEWS (T) and weather (185178)

11.40 FILM: Lifepod (1993) Sci-fi drama focusing on nine survivors of a spaceship disaster trapped in a drifting escape pod with a saboteur among their number. Directed by and starring Ron Silver with Robert Loggia, Jessica Tuck and Stan Shaw (907975)

1.20am FILM: Bite the Bullet (1975) starring Gene Hackman, James Coburn and Candice Bergen. Western set at the turn-of-the-century about a motley crew of riders who enter an endurance horse race. Directed by Richard Brooks (33277598)

3.45 NOT FADE AWAY (6466666)

4.40 FILM: A Tale of Two Cities Animation (3046024)

5.55 NEWS (7415050)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:

12.45pm CELEBRITY SQUARES (936046)

1.20am Film: ARE YOU BEING SERVED? (904918)

3.05 Film: TILL DEATH US DO PART (1968) (345111)

4.50 FOOTBALL EXTRA (4135869)

5.30 THE MAKING OF STAR TREK: BEYOND FIRST CONTACT (5698383)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:

12.45pm-1.15 EMMERDALE (936046)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except:

12.45pm WORLD OF WONDER (936046)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except:

12.45-1.15 CROSSWITS (936046)

S4C

Starts: 6.20am SESAME STREET (6920505)

7.20 THE BABYSITTERS CLUB (8461449)

7.50 STUNT DAWGS (2864449)

8.15 LITTLE SHOP (8646420)

8.35 WHERE ON EARTH IS CARMEN SAN DIEGO? (3903975)

9.00 THE BIG BREAKFAST (99081)

10.00 Film: TOM THUMB (17431979)

11.45 THE ADVENTURES OF MOLE (164371)

12.45pm SLOT MEITHRIN (736028)

1.15 RACING FROM CHELTENHAM (49090604)

3.45 THE BEAST BITES BACK (2559772)

4.30 FAMOUS FRED (94)

5.00 5 PUMP (7265)

5.30 COUNTDOWN (46)

6.00 NEWYDDION (479772)

6.05 HENO (873449)

6.35 SION A SIAN (771642)

7.00 POBOL Y CWM (976420)

7.25 MOM: YR EIDEL (241517)

8.00 STEWART WHYTE MCEWAN JONES (790994) **8.45 NEWYDDION** (243159)

9.00 PAVAROTTI RETURNS TO LLANGOLLEN The tenor entertains (2555)

10.30 BROOKSIDE (495739)

11.05 KLINIK! (196284)

11.20 COWS (909517)

12.15am CAROLINE IN THE CITY (38383)

12.45 HOMICIDE: LIFE ON THE STREET (271208)

RTE 1

Starts: 7.00 EURO NEWS (4747284) **8.00 TEXTFILES** (7543888) **8.15 Film: MONSIEUR VERDOUX** (1634343) **10.15 NEW YEAR'S DAY CONCERT FROM VIENNA** (26842555) **12.30pm WILDVISION** (97474975) **12.35 GARDENERS' DIARY** (46026468) **1.00 THE ICE PRINCESS** (8296913) **1.50 Film: THE SOUND OF MUSIC** (78529197) **4.55 THE FLYING BOATS AT FOYNES** (41518888) **6.00 THE ANGELUS** (9406420) **6.01 SIX-ONE AND WEATHER** (6177361) **6.15 CARTOON TIME** (9401975) **6.20 CONSUMING PASSIONS** (9422468) **6.30 Film: THE THREE MUSKETEERS** (9227130) **7.57 LOTTO DRAW** (4549536) **8.00 Film: THE THREE MUSKETEERS cont** (5280246) **8.30 CORONATION STREET** (5292081) **9.00 NEWS AND WEATHER** (5619420) **9.20 Film: IN THE LINE OF FIRE** (13421352) **11.35 Film: SOME LIKE IT HOT** (76178468)

CHANNEL 4

6.20am SESAME STREET (6920505) **7.20** The Babysitters Club (r) (8461449) **7.50** Stunt Dawgs (2864449) **8.15** Little Shop (r) (8646420) **8.35** Where on Earth is Carmen San Diego? (r) (T) (3903975) **9.00** The Big Breakfast (99081) **10.00** Hangin' With Mr Cooper (r) (T) (87449) **10.30** The Crystal Maze (24246) **11.30** Back to the Future (r) (T) (6573541) **11.55** The Pink Panther (r) (7828439) **12.20pm** Rocko's Modern Life (r) (6564265) **12.45** Soul Searching (T) (736028)

1.15 RACING FROM CHELTENHAM Live coverage of the **1.35, 2.10, 2.45** and **3.20** races (49090604)

3.45 THE BEAST BITES BACK Could animals take over the world? (r) (T) (2559772)

4.30 COUNTDOWN (T) (5604352) Followed by **News** and weather

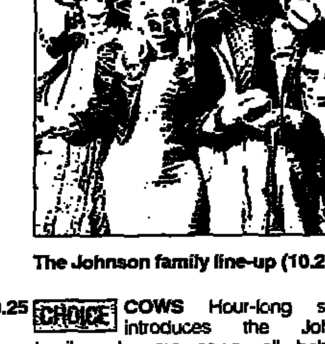
5.05 FILM: I'm All Right Jack (1959, b/w) Classic comedy satire starring Peter Sellers as a militant shop steward. Also with Ian Carmichael, Dennis Price and Richard Attenborough. Directed by John Boulting (T) (22878604)

7.00 ALL STEAMED UP A look at the expensive business of steam railway preservation (T) (2284)

8.00 BROOKSIDE Mike and Lindsey begin to wonder if there relationship has reached the end of its eventful road. Jimmy says farewell to the Close and Max and Susannah entertain unwelcome house guests (T) (3449)

8.30 A WOMAN OF INDEPENDENT MEANS Bess liquidates her assets as she begins her fight for control of the company, which her late husband's family feel should be placed in their hands for safe keeping. Starring Sally Field and Tony Goldwyn (2/3) (T) (38568517)

10.15 CHOICE **KLINIK!** First of a five-part surreal spoof of a Dutch medical soap (647807)



The Johnson family line-up (10.25pm)

10.25 CHOICE **COWS** Hour-long sitcom introduces the Johnson family, who are cows, all behaving extremely badly at every opportunity. Co-written by comedian Eddy Izzard (T) (799807)

11.25 FILM: Brubaker (1980). A fact-based drama starring Robert Redford as a liberal prison warden. Directed by Stuart Rosenberg (27986468)

1.50am FILM: Being There (1979) starring Peter Sellers as an illiterate Washington gardener who becomes a presidential candidate. Also with Shirley MacLaine. Directed by Hal Ashby (61403685)

4.15-6.15 FILM: Hoffman (1970) starring Peter Sellers as a lonely middle-aged man who blackmails a young woman from his firm's typing pool into spending a week at his apartment. Also starring Sinead Cusack. Directed by Bryan Forbes (76550)

SATELLITE AND CABLE

● **For more comprehensive listings of satellite and cable channels, see the Directory, published on Saturday**

SKY 1

7.00am Love Connection (59449) **7.30** Press Your Luck (60284) **8.00** Hotel (44130) **9.00** Designing Women (47994) **9.30** Designing Women (83284) **10.00** Another World (66468) **11.00** Days of Our Lives (46604) **12.00** The Oprah Winfrey Show (73807) **1.00pm** Geraldo (82555) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (80230) **3.00** Jenny Jones (75791) **4.00** The Oprah Winfrey Show (84826) **5.00** Star Trek: The Next Generation (1246) **6.00** Real TV (6401) **6.30** Married... with Children (3951) **7.00** The Simpsons (2975) **7.30** MASH (6265) **8.00** Sightings (21468) **9.00** Silk Stalkings (59984) **10.00** Murder One (67931) **11.00** Star Trek: The Next Generation (87197) **12.00** LAPD (43192) **12.30am** The Lucy Show (37043) **1.00** Hit Mix Long Play (93869)

SKY 2

7.00pm Hercules: The Legendary Journeys (8524371) **8.00** Renegade (8500791) **9.00** New York Undercover (8520555) **10.00** Water Rats (8523642) **11.00** Late Show, with David Letterman (7604178) **12.00** Hit Mix Long Play (2736192)

SKY NEWS

Worldwide news coverage, with bulletins on the hour, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

SKY MOVIES

6.00am Demetrius and the Gladiators (1954) (68371) **8.00** The Blue Bird (1976) (28710) **10.00** Sweet Talker (1990) (95869) **12.00** Getting Even, with Dad (1994) (18933) **2.00pm** Charlie's Ghost Story (1994) (28371) **4.00** The Little Rascals (1994) (6178) **6.00** Josh and SAM (1993) (21604) **7.30** E! News Week in Review (1333) **8.00** Hercules in the Maze of the Minotaur (1994) (10352) **10.00** Before Sunrise (1995) (181555) **11.45** Secret Games III (1995) (702517) **1.20am** Trapped and Deceived (1994) (824431) **2.55** Shame II: The Secret (1996) (5806940) **4.20** Josh and SAM (1993) (65542869)

THE MOVIE CHANNEL

4.00am The Errand Boy (1961) (37245) **7.30** Ghost Stories From the Pickwick Papers (1987) (30333) **8.30** Prehysteria! II (1994) (26246) **10.00** Sister Act II: Back in the Habit (1993) (56130) **12.00** Three Little Ninjas and the Lost Treasure (1990) (16975) **2.00pm** Lassie (1994) (26913) **4.00** Young Indiana Jones (1996) (7420) **6.00** Sister Act II (1993) (13449) **8.00** Naked Gun 33 1/3: The Final Insult (1994) (18994) **10.00** Timecop (1994) (330984) **11.40** Golden Gate (1993) (701868) **1.15am** The House That Mary Bought (1994) (277376) **3.05** The Happy Hooker (1974) (149024) **4.45** Prehysteria! II (1994) (13005)

SKY MOVIES GOLD

4.00am This Island Earth (1954) (6439866) **6.00** Starman (1984) (8266159) **8.00** Enemy Mine (1985) (9261604) **10.00** Predator (1987) (9533062) **11.50** Aliens (1986) (82221284) **2.05pm** Life Force (1985) (5883550) **4.05** My Stepmother Is an Alien (1988) (31520840)

THE DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Muppet Babies (3964062) **6.25** Sing Me a Story, with Belle (3883197) **6.50** Big Garage (5792178) **7.00** Gulliver's Travels (7415352) **7.45** Deck the Halls (4177642) **8.10** Bonkers (7974887) **8.35** Mighty Ducks (6800604) **9.00** Timon and Pumbaa (1203888) **9.10** FILM: Iron Will (14324159) **10.55** Timon and Pumbaa (2370062) **11.05** FILM: Sabrina the Teenage Witch (38434178) **12.40pm** Timon and Pumbaa (44835246) **12.50** FILM: Mary Poppins (48849449) **3.05** Timon and Pumbaa (7307807) **3.15** FILM: Ernest Goes to Camp (749371) **4.45** Timon and Pumbaa (5918286) **4.55** FILM: Tron (39274826) **7.00** Almost Home (5361) **7.30** Dr Quinn (837826) **8.15** Touched by an Angel (887994) **9.00** Life's Work (78826) **9.30-10.00** Golden Girls (69517) Sky Movies Gold takes over at 10pm.

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Racing News (78569) **7.30** Live International Cricket (8933623) **3.30pm** Sports Centre Results Special (76265) **5.00** Live Football Special (92191772) **10.15** Sports Centre (710449) **10.45** International Cricket (439438) **12.45am** Sports Centre (348014) **1.15** Football Special (73046227) **4.15-4.45** Sports Centre (997560)

SKY SPORTS 3

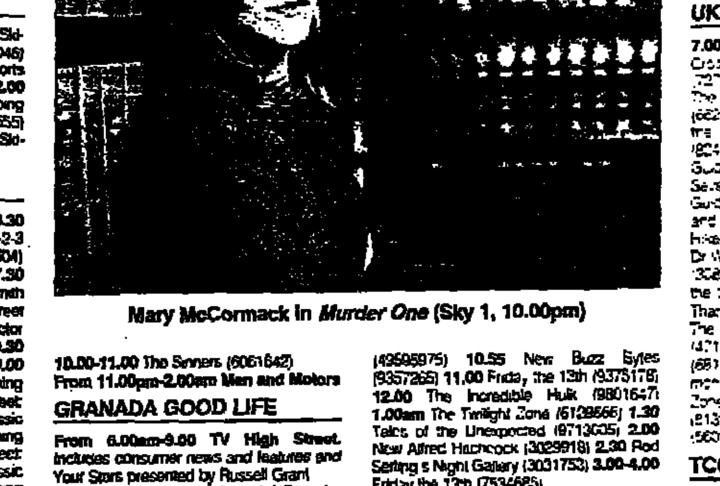
12.00 Drag Racing (8511791) **12.30pm** The Best Goals and Football Bloopers of 1996 (98537081) **2.00** NHL Ice Hockey (20091623) **4.00** Watersports World (43493772) **5.00** WWF: Challenge (75851975) **6.00** Sports Unlimited (67568371) **7.00** Cricket (75789449) **9.00** Watersports World (20092352) **10.00** Sports Unlimited (20002739) **11.00-12.00** Futbol Mundial (43494401)

EUROSPORT

7.30am All Sports (87265) **8.30** Ski-Jumping (66888) **10.00** Karting (26046) **11.00** Football (80062) **12.00** All Sports (83178) **1.00pm** Strongman (42826) **2.00** Live Tennis (4431028) **5.30** Ski-Jumping (95536) **7.30** Live Alpine Skiing (65555) **8.30** Trickshot (30772) **10.30-12.30am** Ski-Jumping (58517)

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am The Krypton Factor (8812284) **6.30** Tickle on the Tum (34908604) **6.45** 1-2-3 Go! (28826468) **7.00** Allsorts (5601604) **7.15** Tickle on the Tum (9898791) **7.30** Graham's Ark (5909951) **7.50** Jose Smith (3427178) **8.00** Classic Coronation Street (1739178) **8.30** The Krypton Factor (1739449) **9.00** Families (1712401) **9.30** Crown Court Special (9747420) **10.00** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (4558420) **10.30** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (1741913) **11.00** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (9835807) **11.30** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (9836536) **12.00** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (1732265) **12.30pm** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (9758536) **1.00** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (6906212) **1.30** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (9757807) **2.00** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (3131130) **2.30** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (2355468) **3.00** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (3150265) **3.30** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (2350913) **4.00** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (2339420) **4.30** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (2335604) **5.00** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (3155710) **5.30** Classic Coronation Street: The Beginning (2359284) **6.00** Classic Coronation Street (2356197) **6.30** Families (2347449) **7.00** The Doctors Series, In Charge 2 (3142246) **7.30** Trouble in Mind (2336333) **8.00** Time for Murder (8048791) **9.00** Classic Coronation Street (9848371) **9.30** Christmas on the Street (9738772) **10.00-11.00** The Sinners (6061642) From 11.00pm-2.00am Men and Motors



Mary McCormack in *Murder One* (Sky 1, 10.00pm)

GRANADA GOOD LIFE

From 6.00am-9.00 TV High Street. Includes consumer news and features and Your Stars presented by Russell Grant **From 9.00-12.00 Food and Wine.** Includes recipes and ideas from Delia Smith **From 12.00-3.00pm Health and Beauty.** Includes Diet and Fitness with Rosemary Conley **From 3.00-6.00 Home and Garden.** Includes The Good Life Style Guide

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

4.00pm Biography Ava Gardner (6161062) **5.00** Modern Marvels (1743807) **6.00** Our Century: 1968-1980, Peace and Love (1708555) **7.00-8.00** Biography The Entertainers — Mickey Rooney (5242505)

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

Films, features and classic series every day from 9pm-4am Monday to Wednesday and 1am-4am Thursday to Sunday on satellite, and from 9am-4am every day on cable **8.00pm** Steven Spielberg's Amazing Stories (1753284) **8.30** The Twilight Zone (1732791) **9.00** FILM: America 3000 (49595975) **10.55** New Buzz Sytes (9357265) **11.00** Friday the 13th (9375178) **12.00** The Incredible Hulk (9801647) **1.00am** The Twilight Zone (6129666) **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected (9713005) **2.00** New Alfred Hitchcock (3029918) **2.30** Rod Serling's Night Gallery (3031753) **3.00-4.00** Friday the 13th (7534685)

TLC/DISCOVERY

9.00am New Yankee Workshop (3134913) **9.30** New Yankee Workshop (1865361) **10.00** New Yankee Workshop (9927791) **10.30** New Yankee Workshop (3130197) **11.00** Rex Hunt's Fishing Adventures (4281178) **11.30** Rex Hunt's Fishing Adventures (4282807) **12.00** Rex Hunt's Fishing Adventures (3121449) **12.30pm** Home Again (3760997) **1.00** Home Again (8690130) **1.30** Home Again (4110438) **2.00** Home Again (8414975) **2.30** Go Fishing (8624888) **3.00** Go Fishing (8426710) **3.30-4.00** Go Fishing (8476523) **DISCOVERY takes over at 4.00pm. 4.00pm** Rex Hunt's Fishing Adventures (4868220) **4.30** Roadshow (4826884) **5.00** Time Travellers (8438565) **5.30** Terra X: Mystery of the Anasazi Indians (8826084) **6.00** Wild Things: Savannah Watch (8815046) **7.00** Next Step (8418791) **7.30** Arthur C Clarke's Mysterious Universe (3476343) **7.30** Arthur C Clarke's Mysterious Universe (9467246) **8.30** Unexplained: Ghostbusters 2 (8413246) **9.00** Unexplained: Alien Hand (8557555) **10.00** Unexplained: The Bermuda Triangle (8590642) **11.00** Warriors (6617807) **12.00** Best of British (2750208) **1.00am** High Five (3464252) **1.30-2.00** Special Forces: French Foreign Legion (2809915)

UK GOLD

7.00am Going for Gold (7124352) **7.35** Crossroads (5662401) **8.00** Neighbours (7277586) **8.25** EastEnders (9722474) **9.00** The Bill (3138271) **9.30** The Sullivans (6621907) **10.05** The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy (7614333) **10.50** Dr Who (8047533) **12.50pm** The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy (4226555) **1.30** Blake's Seven (2218197) **2.30** The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy (6475739) **3.10** Dr Who and the Robots (6461178) **5.00** The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy (7278352) **5.40** Dr Who: More Than 30 Years in the Tardis (3086120) **6.25** The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy (7654625) **7.05** Dr Who: More Than 30 Years in the Tardis (64347569) **8.10** The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy (4712587) **8.55** FILM: Millennium (68132975) **10.50** Dr Who and the Daemons (77239522) **1.00am** The Twilight Zone: Rod Serling's Lost Classics (2131537) **2.30** Shopping at Night (5601685)

TCC

6.00am Susan's Crossing (3986284) **6.20** Meltdown Cybernet (3957772) **6.45** Pugwall (4580621) **7.15** Saved by the Bell (455975) **7.45** California Dreams (454246) **8.15** Sweet Valley High (633826) **8.45** Art Attack (1006474) **9.00** Tiny TCC (5832343) **9.20** Brum (1292587) **9.40** Johnson and Friends (9010826) **9.50** Towser (9009710) **10.00** Robin and Rosie of Cockleshell Bay (4503265) **10.15** King Rollo (1158791) **10.20** Philbert the Frog (1155604) **10.25** Christopher Crocodile (4582772) **10.40** Charlie Chalk (3768130) **11.00** Dinobabies (61536) **11.30** Jim Henson's Animal Show (62265) **12.00** Barney (36791) **12.30pm** Where's Wally? (85555) **1.00** Casper and Friends (60555) **1.30** Tiny and Crew (34703072) **1.45** Teddy Trucks (57496178) **1.55** Johnson and Friends (75533197) **2.15** Babaloos (52544333) **2.20** Bump (62365826) **2.30** Christopher Crocodile (3198772) **2.40** Mr Benn (7000468) **3.00** Pugwall (1284) **3.30** Saved by the Bell (2642) **4.00** California Dreams (6449) **4.30-5.00** Sweet Valley High (7339)

NICKELODEON

6.00am Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles (64333) **6.30** Biker Mice from Mars (95081) **7.00** Captain Simian and the Space Monkeys (98081) **7.30** Tales from the Cryptkeeper (84888) **8.00** Mighty Max (99046) **8.30** Hey Arnold (98517) **9.00** Rugrats (73081) **10.00** Aaahh!! Real Monsters (50333) **10.30** Rocko's Modern Life (54951) **11.00** Bruno the Kid (16062) **11.30** The Ren and Stimpy Show (17791) **12.00** Sister Sister (39250) **1.00pm** Moesha (97352) **1.30** The Secret World of Alex Mack (26888) **2.00** Clarissa Explains It All (4975) **2.30** Doug (2623) **3.00** Aaahh! Real Monsters (6710) **3.30** Stickin' Around (4468) **4.00** Bruno the Kid (3975) **4.30** Rugrats (9159) **5.00** Sister Sister (7062) **6.00** Moesha (3352) **6.30-7.00** Are You Afraid of the Dark? (4604)

PARAMOUNT

7.00pm Diff'rent Strokes (8791) **7.30** Benson (2848) **8.00** Due South (43604) **9.00** Almost Perfect (26826) **9.30** Taxi (30081) **10.00** Entertainment UK (93062) **10.30** Girls on Top (44410) **11.00** Paramount Presents (31371) **11.30** Nightstand (38178) **12.30am** Sledge Hammer! (40531) **1.00** Due South (47289) **2.00** Entertainment UK (67531) **2.30** Paramount Presents (86656) **3.00** Girls on Top (19821) **3.30-4.00** Almost Perfect (77918)

BRAVO

12.00 The Time Tunnel (5715848) **1.00pm** Remington Steele (8615848) **2.00** Space 1999 (8583352) **4.00** FILM: Teen Wolf (8424352) **6.00** Thunderbirds (8710492) **7.00** The Champions (8595197) **8.00** Alien Nation (8571517) **9.00** The Persuaders (8584081) **10.00-12.00** FILM: Borderline (4272420)

UK LIVING

6.00am Kilroy (6932587) **6.50** Trivial Pursuit (16168642) **7.10** Turnabout (4157994) **7.40** The Young and the Restless (5875420) **8.30** Rhodes Around Britain (8253401) **9.00** Charlie's Angels (43018807) **10.05** Jerry Springer Uncut (3160081) **11.00** The Young and the Restless (2550791) **11.55** Brookside (88187807) **12.25pm** Call the Doctor (1932265) **12.50** Gabrielle (5499062) **1.40** The Gordon Elliott Show (8638975) **2.30** The Agony Experience (6562536) **3.00** Life at Three (15534474) **4.10** The Jerry Springer Show (4916081) **5.05** Lingo (76952807) **5.30** Lucky Ladders (6566352) **6.00** I Dream of Jeannie (8026159) **6.35** Ready, Steady, Cook (6635555) **7.05** Brookside (8191555) **7.35** Who's Sorry Now? (2228021) **8.05** Rolonda (5365401) **9.00** FILM: Tonya and Nancy: The Inside Story (9268517) **11.00-12.00** The Sex Files II (9012888)

FAMILY CHANNEL

5.00pm Blockbusters (3401) **5.30** Treasure Hunt (44913) **6.30** Catchphrase (9178) **7.00** The Pyramid Game (3265) **7.30** Hart to Hart (83975) **8.30** Only When I Laugh (1420) **9.00** Father Dowling (13082) **10.00** Stay Lucky (71401) **11.00** Rising Damp (63517) **11.30** FM (10062) **12.00** Lou Grant (66208) **1.00am** Father Dowling (65460) **2.00** Hart to Hart (62173) **3.00** Lou Grant (18537) **4.00** All Together Now (36685) **4.30-5.00** The Black Stallion (58734)

MTV

The 24 hour music channel. Includes news, reviews, live concert footage, interviews and the latest music video charts

VH-1

The video hits channel. Classic rock and pop videos and the best new sounds

ZEE TV

7.00am Jaagran **7.30** Life Style East **8.30** Positive Health Show **9.00** Bengali Serial: Ebar Jumbo Mama **9.30** Abhinetri **10.00** Tara **11.00** Women's Magazine Programme, Manasi **11.30** Dance Mania **12.00** Darrar **12.30pm** Nukkad **1.00** FILM: Angaaray **4.00** Public Demand **5.00** ZEE Zone **5.30** Alif Laila **6.00** Campus **6.30** ZEE and You **7.00** Kamal Kombination **7.30** Banagi Apni Baat **00** News and Euronews **8.30** Dastaan **9.05-12.00** FILM: Army

CARTOON NETWORK/TNT

Continuous cartoons from 5am to 9pm, then TNT films as below.
9.00pm Kelly's Heroes (1970) (65720284) **11.30** The Dirty Dozen (1967) (65718449) **2.00am-5.00** Where Eagles Dare (1969) (84127956)

PERFORMANCE

7.00pm Rickie Lee Jones (9297642) **8.00** Aria (3289343) **8.30** Barber of Seville (15606994) **11.15** Aria (8122468) **12.00-1.00am** Dave Holland Quintet (1481821)

TAKEOVERS 35
Leaping to the defence of Simon de Zoete

BUSINESS

SHARES 36
Simon Bentley leads the top 1996 performers

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 1 1997

BUSINESS EDITOR LINDSAY COOK

Bankers forecast housing market to strengthen further

By Janet Bush
Economics Editor

THE housing market is set for a general and sustainable strengthening this year, according to the British Bankers' Association, which yesterday unveiled its latest mortgage lending figures.

The major British banking groups made gross loans of £2.672 billion in November, virtually the same as October's total of £2.667 billion. Seasonally adjusted figures for net lending showed a rise in mortgage lending of £610 million in November, a touch down on the £623 million increase in October.

New approvals were down 6 per cent from October's level, with a total value of £2.358 billion approved in November against £2.503 billion previously. However, the BBA noted that these figures still compared favourably with last year's 10 per cent fall in the value of approvals between October and November.

Tim Sweeney, Director-General of the BBA, said: "The steady recovery seen over recent months in the major banks' mortgage business continued in November, and the indications for future growth are promising." He noted that approvals had held up well in November after October's strong figures and that, together with the fact that building society mortgage lending figures are higher than a year ago, the evidence is of a general and sustainable strengthening in the market.

The BBA's figures suggest that the quarter-point rise in base lending rates at the end of October has not dented activity in the housing market. Although most building societies did not move their rates until December, once they had seen the contents of the Budget, some psychological impact might have been expected from the first base rate rise for 21 months.

Lenders are now looking towards the next monetary meeting between Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, on January 15. Although Mr Clarke has said he sees no dangerous inflationary pressures emerging, Mr George believes rates will have to rise sooner or later.

Most forecasters expect another quarter-point rise in rates early in the new year. Some argue that, faced with pressure from the Bank, Mr Clarke may opt to move in January, as far away from the election as possible. Others suggest that the Chancellor may want to wait until February's monetary meeting, when he will have seen the fourth-quarter growth figures, published on January 27.

The BBA's positive assessment of prospects for the housing sector echos the optimism expressed by a clutch of leading lenders. The Halifax building society, Britain's biggest mortgage lender, said yesterday that the housing market recovery was now well established and forecast a "sustainable and healthy recovery" in 1997. It is expecting house prices to rise by between 6 per cent and 8 per cent this year. The Halifax said that there was a danger of a 1980s style boom and bust, but emphasised that this was still unlikely.

The Nationwide and Abbey National both believe that house prices will rise by an average of 7 per cent this year, while Barclays Mortgages said that homeowners are becoming more optimistic about the market.

Freeze lifts oil price and worries insurers

By Marianne Curphey and Carl Mortished

THE cold snap in Europe pushed oil prices higher yesterday, and prompted warnings from insurers that the freeze over Britain may soon lead to increases in household and motor premiums.

In the oil market, the price of the February Brent Crude contract rose to $23.80 per barrel in London, and heating oil closed at $223.80 per tonne, up a further 75 cents after Monday's $6 surge in price. However, gas prices in Britain remain subdued.

Very cold weather at Christmas 1995 cost Britain's insurance companies £400 million, with Scotland and northern England the worst-affected areas. The Association of British Insurers (ABI) yesterday gave warning that if record low temperatures affect the whole of the country this year, claims could run into billions of pounds.

Insurers have laid on hundreds of extra staff to cope with an expected influx of calls from homeowners suffering from damage caused by burst pipes when the thaw eventually begins.

Although the ABI has spent more than £135,000 this winter trying to inform householders how to avoid damage, its members are bracing themselves for a rise in claims over the next few weeks.

Last year, most of the damage occurred during the holiday period, when temperatures were at their lowest and many business premises were empty, unheated and unchecked for a fortnight. Insurers paid out more than £100 million for cold-weather damage to commercial premises.

A spokesman for Royal & Sun Alliance said: "If insurers experience another winter of large claims, they will have to reconsider their current rates."

Bacton prices for gas reported by PH Energy Analysis range between 14p-16p per therm, well below the 25p per therm seen in a sudden spike in price in November.

Transco, which runs the gas flexibility market, said that demand was subdued, probably due to the long closure of businesses over Christmas and the new year holiday.

Astec's chairman sells £2.4m of shares

By Sarah Cunningham

BRIAN CHRISTOPHER, the non-executive chairman of Astec (BSR), the electronics components group that he helped to found 25 years ago, has sold £2.46 million worth of shares in the company, it was revealed yesterday.

A spokesman for the company said that Mr Christopher, who is 63 and has two children, sold 1.6 million shares on Monday out of the family trust. The sale was for personal reasons, the spokesman added.

Mr Chrisopher sold the shares at 154p each and has retained 3.1 million shares in the company, equal to a 0.5 per cent stake.

Mr Christopher founded Astec in Hong Kong in 1971 with Neal Stewart. In the late Seventies Astec was backed into BSR, the struggling Birmingham-based company formerly known as Birmingham Sound Reproducers. The group has been based in Hong Kong since 1983 but its shares are still listed in London. Mr Christopher became the chief executive of the group in 1982 and chairman in 1988.

Shares in Astec (BSR) fell 1p to 157½p yesterday. The rest of Mr Christopher's stake is therefore worth nearly £5 million.

Engineers see 400,000 job losses

By Philip Bassett, Industrial Editor

BRITAIN'S engineering industry is likely to lose up to 400,000 jobs through technological and product change, industry leaders are to announce.

The industry's forecast of jobs to shed over the next decade is in addition to any jobs which may be lost for economic reasons over the business cycle.

Leaders of the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF) will announce the forecast job losses later this month, when they reveal the results of a long-term strategic review of the future of the engineering industry in Britain.

Based on an extensive survey of engineering company chief executives, training and development professionals, academics and other opinion formers, the EEF's forecast will steer clear of business changes, including job losses or gains, resulting from the economic cycle. It will instead focus on the shape of the engineering industry until the year 2010.

In overall terms, the review will suggest that the prospects for engineering in Britain look reasonably optimistic. The review will also suggest that Britain is likely to focus increasingly on the higher-value computer-based control and systems products rather than traditional metal-bashing.

The strategic review will suggest that such technological and product market changes will have a significant impact on the engineering workforce in the UK. EEF leaders will forecast a decline in the workforce in Britain from its current level of about 1.6 million people to between 1.2 and 1.4 million — a cut of up to 400,000 jobs by the year 2010.

Most of the job cuts will be driven by the changing and higher skill mix the industry is expected to require. The industry's review will say that the profile of the remaining engineering workforce will change "significantly", with a sharp reduction in the number of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs.

Instead, there will be a much higher proportion of professional engineers, technologists and technicians as the technological and skill requirement of the industry increases.

Although the industry will recognise that such changes will have considerable implications for its current workforce the EEF's study will forecast that 50 per cent of the people who will join the industry in the future will have had some form of higher education.

The review will also conclude that the industry's workforce will be increasingly flexible, with a higher proportion of women employed at all levels, especially in graduate and technical positions.

EEF leaders, who are arguing that the industry will increasingly move from current "lean" production techniques to what the review will describe as "agile" manufacturing — a flexible and reconfigurable approach to business which will involve smaller manufacturing units coming together on an ad hoc basis — are suggesting that the changes they are forecasting will carry further implications for employee relations in engineering.

National collective bargaining was ended in Britain's engineering industry in 1989, and the EEF will suggest that the changes it envisages in its strategic review will present a "real challenge" to trade unions organising in the traditionally highly unionised sector.

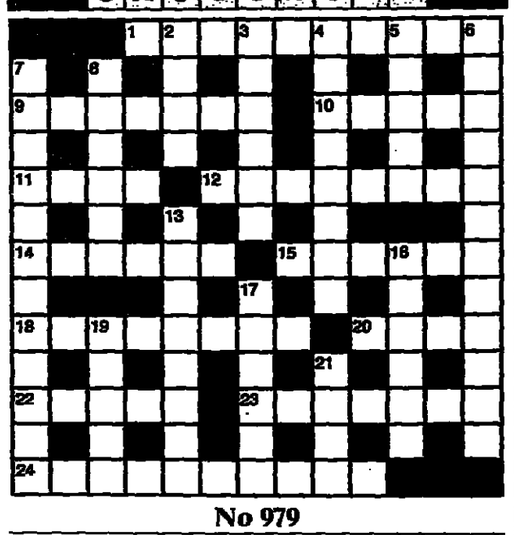
The highly skilled and highly paid people the industry will need, together with more flexible manufacturing systems, are likely to reduce the need for union representation and highly structured trade union agreements, the EEF argues.

One EEF leader says: "I see these changes as totally changing the traditional trade union-employer relationships, and a further decline of union membership in the manufacturing sector."

PETER NICHOLLS

Victoria Younghusband, a lawyer with Stephenson Harwood, becomes the first woman to join the City University Club. Three London clubs are men only. Ms Younghusband, who first visited the club as her father's guest in October, said: "I abhor the 'sandwiches at the desk routine'."

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 979

ACROSS
1 Double-edged (compliment): southpaw (boxer) (4-6)
9 Mercury alloy (7)
10 Brainless, violent hero (*80s films*) (5)
11 Destiny (4)
12 In which Danube, Dnieper *drain* (5,3)
14 Reduce in effectiveness (6)
15 Walk gently (6)
18 To flatter (6,2)
20 Brick-firing oven (4)
22 Doomed, romantic hero (*Shak.*) (5)
23 Systematic study of phe*nomena* (7)
24 (Artistic) dabbler (10)

DOWN
2 Advantage; rim (4)
3 Fall; dry (clothes) in machine (6)
4 Wicked action (8)
5 Jettisons; the miserable down in them (5)
6 Make embarrassing error (4,1,7)
7 Tudor style (*house*) (4-8)
8 Portable computer (6)
13 Annihilated (5,3)
16 The East (6)
17 Its behaviour "a riddle ... a mystery ... an enigma" (*Churchill*) (6)
19 S India, Sri Lanka people, language (5)
21 Thin fog (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 978
ACROSS: 1 Home help 5 Etch 9 Good Samaritan 10 Shoe 11 New Year 13 Infant 15 Sensor 18 Tsunami 20 Bach 23 Reprehensible 24 Also 25 Holy Week
DOWN: 1 Huge 2 Mooch 3 Has-been 4 Le Mans 6 Tatters 7 Honorary 8 Crow 12 Victoria 14 Faux pas 16 Embassy 17 Cicero 19 Apex 21 Cable 22 Deck

SOLUTION TO TIMES TWO CROSSWORD 974
In association with BRITISH MIDLAND
ACROSS: 1 Ill-treat 5 Seek 8 Betel 9 Athlete 11 Box 12 Octennial 13 Devote 15 Dulcet 18 Pendulous 19 Cox 20 Legible 21 Idler 22 Nerd 23 Tentacle
DOWN: 1 Imbibed 2 Latex 3 Rule of thumb 4 Awaits 6 Elegiac 7 Knell 10 Honours list 14 Vinegar 16 Tax-free 17 Popeye 18 Pylon 19 Colic

Due to the Christmas post, the winners of the Times Two Crossword 974 will be published next Wednesday.
All flights subject to availability.

Shares close year with a record

By Michael Clark and Janet Bush

SHARE prices in London saw out the shortened trading session on the last day of the year on a high note. But it was not the fast and furious end to the year that many investors had hoped for.

After hitting a new intra day high of 4,123.2, the FT-SE 100 index of leading shares ended just 2.8 up at a new closing high of 4,118.5. That is a rise on the year for the index of 11.7 per cent.

But the year-on-year performance of the FT-SE falls far short of the 20.3 per cent rise it achieved in 1995.

Inevitably, with the stock market closing at 12.30pm turnover was affected. It slumped to its lowest level of the year with just 203 million shares changing hands.

The pound appropriately ended a year of spectacular gains on a rising note, gaining not only against a weakening mark but also against a resurgent dollar.

Sterling's effective index against a basket of currencies ended at 96.1 yesterday, a substantial rise even on Monday's close of 95.6. At the end of 1996, it stood 15.6 per cent higher than at the end of 1995.

The pound's gains have been most spectacular against a sagging yen, rising 24 per cent. Sterling rose 16.9 per cent against the French franc and 18.7 per cent against the mark. It appreciated 10.3 per cent against the dollar, which itself was doing well in comparison with other world currencies.

☐ **Because of problems at our supplier, a small proportion of the unit trust prices on page 34 has not been updated from Monday.**

Businessman sues the SFO for libel

By Jon Ashworth

AN Isle of Man businessman is suing the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) for defamation, in a case linked to the prosecution of Charles Deacon, the Staffordshire solicitor jailed last January over an international "advance fee" fraud.

Thomas Taylor, of Santon in the Isle of Man, is suing the SFO and a Staffordshire policeman acting for it over an interview conducted in March 1995.

Mr Taylor alleges slander in remarks made during the interview, which was conducted at the offices of Burton Copeland, the solicitor. He further alleges that a transcript of the interview is libellous. Mr Taylor is suing for unspecified damages.

Details are outlined in a writ issued at the High Court in London. Mr Taylor could not be contacted yesterday, and his lawyer was unable to comment.

The SFO said it had received the writ, and would be contesting the allegations.

The case is thought to be linked to ongoing investigations surrounding the Deacon case.

Deacon and his accomplice, James Fuller, were jailed for a total of 16 years at Middlesex Crown Court in January, after they were convicted of swindling companies and individuals out of a total of £11.25 million.

Victims included Belling, the former cooker manufacturer, which paid £2.5 million from pension fund assets against a $50 million loan which never materialised. Belling went into liquidation soon afterwards.

GWR stays tuned to takeover

By Sarah Cunningham

Henry Meakin expects to enhance earnings

GWR, the acquisitive regional radio group which on Monday completed the purchase of Classic FM, kept up the pace yesterday by buying Radio Wyvern for £3.9 million.

Henry Meakin, chairman of GWR, said: "The acquisition will increase the enlarged group's attractiveness and potential to advertisers and sponsors." He said the deal should be earnings enhancing in the year ending March 31, 1998.

The cash bid values each Radio Wyvern share at £7.55, and offers a notional interest payment of 24p. There is a share alternative of 4.01 new GWR shares for each Radio Wyvern share. GWR said 57 per cent of Radio Wyvern shareholders, including the station's directors, have already committed themselves to accepting the offer.

GWR already operates 32 local licences in the UK and has 3.9 million listeners in the South, Midlands and East of England. As part of the disposal programme after the Classic FM acquisition, GWR has agreed to sell some of its shares in Leicester Sound and LNR, and some AM licences.

Radio Wyvern, which serves Hereford and Worcester, has one FM and one AM licence. GWR may dispose of the Wyvern Radio FM licence, or of its Severn Sound FM licence, if regulators decide it is too dominant in the area.

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